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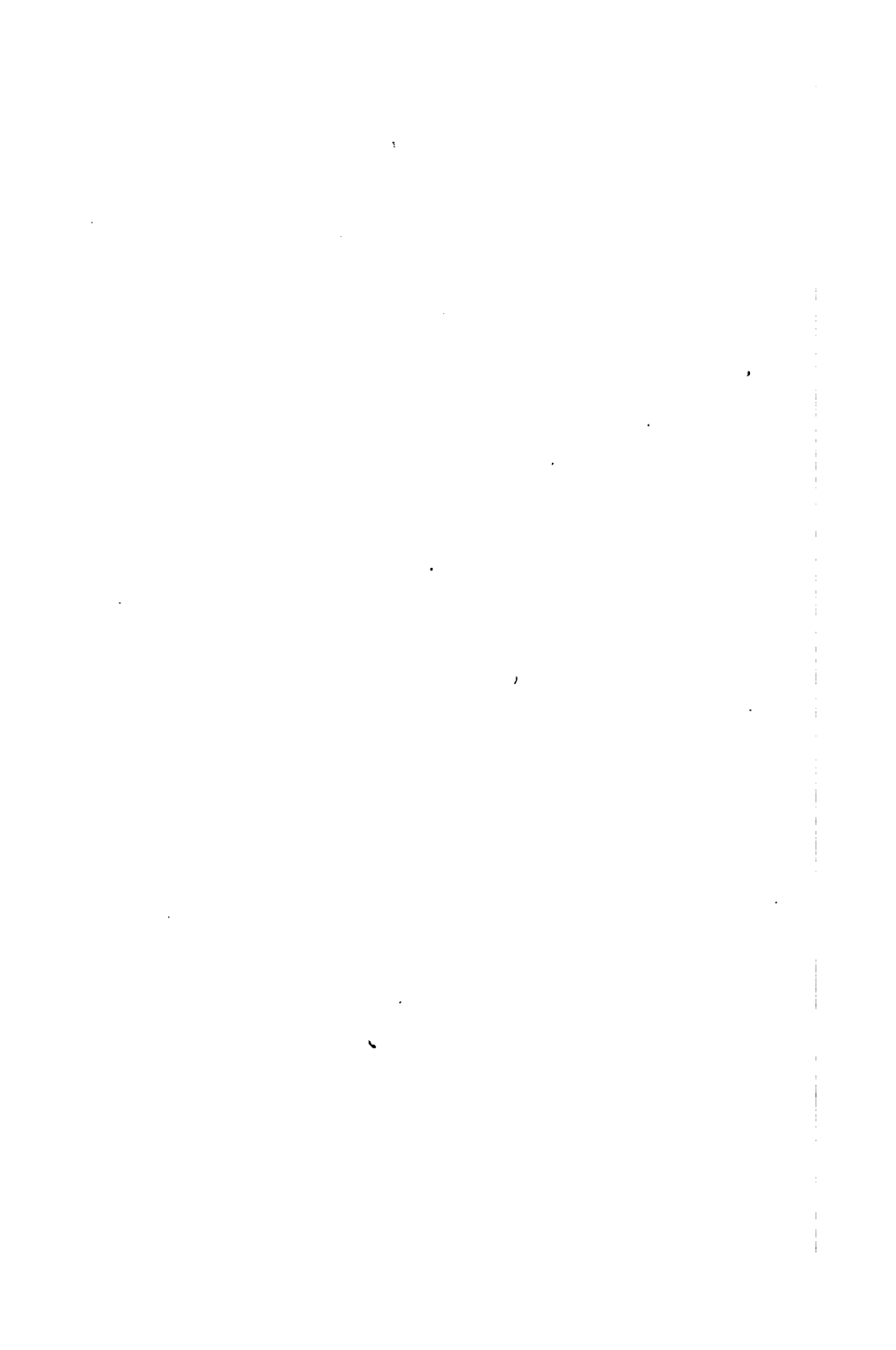


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BEHIND THE SCENES.



BY

Rocina (Wheeler)

LADY RUTHER-LYTTON.

AUTHOR OF "CHREVELEY," "SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS," ETC.

"Providence is dark in its permissions; yet one day when all is known,
The universe of Reason shall acknowledge how just and good were they."

Tupper's Proverbial Philosophy.

"All who have treated of divine subjects, whether Greeks or barbarians, industriously involved the beginnings of things, and delivered the truth in enigmas, signs, and symbols; in allegories, and metaphors, and other such figures."

Clement of Alexandria, Strom. L. v., p. 658, Ox. Ed.

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Dedication.

TO THE GREAT—AND WILL BE GREATER—

AMERICAN NATION;

WHO ALL, IN "GOING AHEAD"

IN THE MIGHTY RACE OF

SOCIAL, MORAL, SCIENTIFIC, LITERARY, POLITICAL, AND ARTISTIC
EMULATION,

NEVER FORGET THAT

A SOUND HEART

IS

THE BEST SCREW PROPELLER THAT THE VAST ENGINE OF
PROGRESSION CAN HAVE,

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED BY THEIR FRIEND
AND ADMIRER,

THE AUTHOR.



The original intention of the Authoress was merely to have appeared as the Editor of this work, but circumstances have occurred during its progress through the press, which render the acknowledgment of the authorship desirable.

PRELIMINARY ADDRESS.

TO ALL WHO SUFFER.

I ADDRESS these remarks to you, fellow-sufferers, because everything in these days, is "FOR THE MILLION!" But as all works of apparent supererogation require, if not an apology, at least an explanation, I must say a few words that may serve for the latter; for, truly, at an epoch when the very gravitation of the world seems endangered by the chaotic masses under which every printing-press groans, anything in the shape of an additional atom, laid on the tottering heap, may be well calculated to create alarm; besides "How presumptuous!" some will exclaim—"Lay Sermons, indeed! as if there were not already a superabundance of proper, orthodox, clerical sermons both preached, and published, without the world being inundated with any amateur trash!" True, most true, my dear sir, or madam; and so completely did I agree with you, in this view of the case, that most assuredly these humble pages would never have seen the light in a printed form, had it not been for the following circumstances. Often have I heard it remarked, with regret, by those "who labour and are heavy laden," both in coming out of the lowly porch of the village fane, and on leaving the more gorgeous aisles of some mediæval cathedral, that the text had not been more expounded, and less often repeated; and this remark more par-

ticularly struck me coming from the lips of good mistress Amy Verner, the landlady of a little road-side Highland inn, and at one and the same time, the Sir Oracle, as well as the Lady Bountiful of that ilk, as she and I were one Sabbath leaving the village church together. It was evident something had displeased her, either in or before the afternoon-service, though most probably the former; for albeit Archdeacon Panmuir was no favourite of hers, although an excellent customer in a *spirituous* point of view, and first cousin to The Panmuir, the Laird of Glenfern.

"Good day, Mrs. Verner," said I. But no answer did the worthy lady vouchsafe, but kept nervously twitching her fingers, and muttering to herself—

"Eh, weel, praching is ane thing and practising is anither; ond then to thank o'him dinning ento us, as ef we waur a pack o' heathens just; that we were to believe in the Laird Jesus Christ; av coorse we believe in him, at least we profess to do so; or we should na' coom to a Christian kirk. Sammy Panmuir: much better tell us hoo to prove oor blief, as oor blessed Laird did himsel, wi' parables and the like, which were human stories of human deeds, braught hame to human understandings, and not ding-dang at the text, which we can a' speer oot for oursels, in oor ain Bibles, at hame. 'Wait on the Laird,' indeed! nae fear but yer just the lad that wad wait on the Laird fast enoo gin ye thought he had a better living in his gift to gi' ye, Sammy Panmuir!" The latter part of this speech was in allusion to the text, which had been from Isaiah xi. 31—"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles: they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

"Hoot! Maister Alciphron, yer the vary chiel that cud do it," added she, turning quickly round upon me.

"Do what, my good Mrs. Verner?"

"Why just prent a few bit parables to pit a' these prachings into practice. Eh! if it waur ainly the awfu' tragedy of the puir young laird, just."

"Nay," rejoined I, as I shook my head with a melancholy smile. "For that matter, the printing would not come any nearer to the practice, than the preaching."

"Eh, weel, ye ken vara weel what I mean: ye've *bin* a' the warld over; ye've sipt sorrow *oot* of avry ane's cup, and can aye feel for they that ha' the draining o' those bitter cups; nae grief's sae strange, but what ye ken a fellow to it; nae heart sae dark, but what ye ha' a gleam of the true light to cheer it wi'. The world's a wide field that death is ever mowing; but the harvest thereof is God's for a' that—though the deil does get the tares; and ye ha' nae gleaned in thot field for sae mony weary years without the Laird helping you to bind up yer load; sae, noo that the evening is come, ye maun just write a few parables shewing forth the gudeness o' God, to *pit* a little heart into those that have still to toil through the heat o' the day—it wad do mair good than a' Sammy Panmuir's flings at the Papists, which he must have; waur he preaching about Persians or potatoes, he cud na' get on, without a spar at the Pope!"

"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead," said I, "and if either precept or example could mend the world, it had been made whole long ere this. 'Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God alone giveth the increase.' So we can only conclude that the time is not yet come, for either precept or example to bear fruit; what presumption therefore would it be in me to imagine that breath of mine could do anything towards ripening those precious fruits."

"Hoot! hoot, mon! ye ken those giant oak'es that grow out of the slate quarry by the mountain side; and the bright, fresh,

bonnie wild flowers that seem to wave and laugh like wee things of bairns round their roots, a' cold and barren though the soil be? Weel, it was nae mortal hand that planted them, but the puir birds o' the air, just, who as they flew to their rest, dropped the precious seeds they carried in their mouths by *chance*! But mind ye; the *chances* of the creatures of one generation, are the characters of the Creator to future ages; and think ye, Maister Alciphron, that the birds of the air have a higher mission to do God's work than you have? or that the good seed dropped from *your* mouth, however casually, or however barren and arid the soil may be whereon it happens to fall, will be less fostered by God, or less smiled on by His angels? * Besides, it is *facts* (facts) we want, for it is *facts* that does the good; and when I ha' seen as I ha' done, within the last sax months, the wounds ye have healed by a word in due season, Effie Cameron, Jenny M'Cleod, Meggie Armstrong, and me, will let ye hae nae peace, till ye *prent* the *facts* we have heerd ye tell."

I confess that good Dame Verner's simile of the sturdy oaks growing in Herculean strength and almost fabulous luxuriance out of the sterile quarry, while sweet, ever-springing flowers, like happy thoughts and gentle emotions, twined around their strength, had more to do with inducing me to cast my humble offering into Nature's universal lap, than even the combined terrors of the Effie, Jenny, and Meggie triumvirate, who, sooth to say, were not calculated to endanger any man's peace; unless, indeed, it were after the fashion in which the weird sisters jeopardized that of Macbeth. Moreover, I reflected that had the birds of the air possessed the reasoning powers of human beings, and with these their concomitant vanity and ambition, they would have held tight

* "There is a pretty, pious, and poetical superstition in many mountainous districts of Scotland and Ireland, that wherever wild flowers abound in a stone or slate quarry, the angels have smiled in passing over the desolate waste, which has instantly blushed into flowers, beneath their celestial notice."

their little germ of future power, and never have condescended to drop it into barren quarries and unfrequented by-ways, not being satisfied unless they had a proper field for their labours, and could plant forests! parks! gardens! and all the broad highways and thoroughfares of the world. Thanks, little rooks and ravens, for teaching me a great lesson—namely, that each separate unit of this concrete world should labour in its vocation, only where, when, and how the Creator pleaseth; to attempt *more* is rebellion—to do *less* is disobedience.

“Well, well, Mrs. Verner,” said I, as I closed the little gate of the churchyard behind us, we being the last, owing to our protracted conversation—“I’ll consider of it. And now, how about your poor invalid—is he better?”

“Better! ah, weel, yes—mickle better I ween than Sammy Panmuir, though *he* be *ca’d* a Christian, and *’tither* a Jew.”

“Do you think he would see me?—unless,” added I, “it may interfere with the Archdeacon’s visit?”

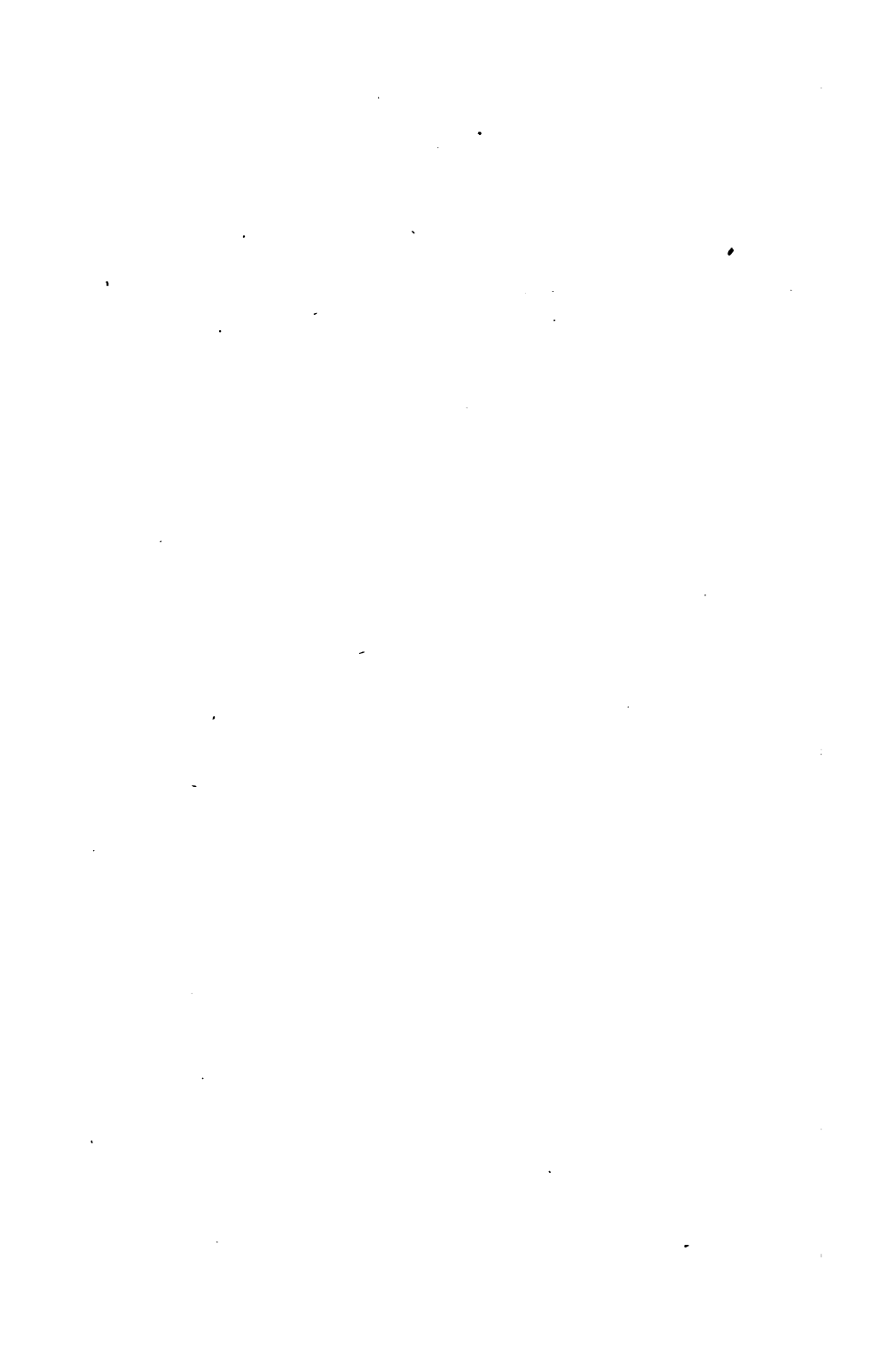
“Hoot! it’s little ye ken of Sammy Panmuir; if ye think *he’d* spatter his phariseeical pride by gangang to see a sick Jew! Nae, nae, he leaves that to Publicans”—

“And sinners,” I chimed in, as I followed Mrs. Verner into her dominions—the bar of the “Panmuir Arms;” and some “*facts*” that there came to my knowledge, determined me upon what that worthy woman called “*Prenting my Parables*;” or in other words, publishing the following

LAY SERMONS,

all of which have but one text—

“DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD THEY SHOULD DO UNTO YOU.”





P R E F A C E .

To bore the reader with a Preface is, perhaps, of all an author's faults, the one he is least inclined to pardon; but among the many twaddles of our times there is one very rife (more, it is true, among reviewers, than among the general class of readers emphatically called, "The Public"), and this one consists in asking, "*Why* won't people write novels in one volume, like 'The Vicar of Wakefield!'" Simply because each succeeding age has its own peculiar tone and inflection, of which writers are but the echoes, and therefore they cannot choose but echo them correctly.

Life in Goldsmith's day, was much less hurried, and, above all, much less filled up, not to say closely packed, than it is now; and even the Primrose family, had they been created in these days, and located in Cornwall itself, or even at Lancaſt!—where local traditions aver that the devil caught cold and died! (which, if true, would have considerably abridged *his* memoirs)—still, Deborah herself would have been different, for she would have taken in "Eliza Cook's Journal," and so deserted pickles for poetry. As for the Vicar, dear, good, Christian soul that he was, *he* would have been such a fish out of water, that I doubt if *he* could have existed at all in these high-pressure times.

The girls, indeed, from being (as all girls are) more adaptive, might have got on very well; only instead of "flourishing upon catgut," they would have flourished upon paper. George, though he might have deserted Miss Wilmot, would at least have had the *prudence* not to lose sight of her strong box. Burchell, instead of frittering away his energies in whistles and gingerbread for the children, would have devoted himself to the world at large, either by concocting or subverting dynasties. The town ladies—but more especially Miss Carolina Whilhelmina Amelia Skeggs—instead of *talking* "taste, Shakspeare, and the musical glasses," would have *written* upon table-turning, sonnambulism, and the mesmeric asses! The seven Miss Flamboroughs would at *least* have been drawn with seven pine-apples, instead of seven oranges, in their hands. Dick, instead of getting a lump of sugar for speaking first, would have repudiated sugar altogether, from the innate conviction that its saccharine properties are injurious to the gastric juices. Moses, instead of buying grosses of green spectacles at English fairs, would have given his great commercial talents a wider scope, by going on a foreign tour with those distinguished travellers, "Brown, Jones, and Robinson." And, though last not least, Squire Thornhill, instead of playing the French horn at his uncle's side-table, would have played first fiddle—by making his profligacy cosmopolitan, and writing moral essays for "The Edinburgh," and utilitarian articles for "The Westminster," relieved by occasional educational and philanthropic harangues at Mechanics' Institutes, till *Provincial* Mammas and Misses (bless their innocent hearts, and ignorant heads!) would have deemed him a model Moralist!"

But population having greatly increased—as the aforesaid

Westminster scholar and Miss Martineau can inform you,—and the said population all going at railway speed, is one cause which has swelled the bulk of novels (for Richardson is the exception that proves the rule, he being the only old romancer that ever laboured under that fearful malady, literary elephantiasis!); for, with the multitudinous *Dramatis Personæ* which a transcript of modern life entails, it is impossible to be graphic within a very restricted compass. The most masterly fictions in the language are Daniel De Foe's; and why is this? Not, certainly, even from their unrivalled English and incomparable style, but from their being so graphic as to make it almost impossible to believe that they are not only realities, but realities scrupulously and minutely noted; for, as the great Lord Chatham, before he discovered De Foe's "Memoirs of a Cavalier, during the Civil Wars in England," to be a fiction, used to cite it as the best account of the Civil Wars extant; so the world at large believed "Robinson Crusoe" to be a veritable history. Having evoked this great name, I cannot express my own feelings better (more especially in regard to the fate of this work) than in this "second Daniel's" own terse and energetic words—"I am a Stoic," says he, and say I, "In whatever may be the event of things, I'll do and say what I think is a debt to justice and truth, without the least regard to clamour and reproach; and as I am utterly unconcerned at human opinion, the people who throw away their breath so freely in censuring me, may consider of some better use to make of their passions, than to waste them on a person that is both above and below the reach of them. I know too much of the world to expect good in it; and I have learned to value it too little to be concerned at the evil. I have gone through a life of wonders, and am the subject

•

of a vast variety of providences; I have been fed more by miracle than Elijah, when the ravens were his purveyors; and in the school of affliction I have learnt more philosophy than at the academy, and more divinity than from the pulpit."

With reference to the *Dramatis Personæ* of these Lay Sermons, I refer all readers to "Gil Blas'" author's dedication, which is mine—only Le Sage got hold of it first!—and *au sage un demi mot!*

ALCIPHRON.

London, 1854.

BEHIND THE SCENES.



PARABLE THE FIRST.

SECTION I.

The Jew and the Gentile.

"Who can understand his errors?"—PSALM xix. 12.

"The more honest a man is, the less he affects the air of a saint. The affectation of sanctity is a blot on the face of piety."—LAVATER.

As there is nothing higher, broader, and, at the same time, more profound, than CHRISTIANITY; so is there nothing lower, shallower, and narrower than sectarianism: while the former, emanating from God, approaches us to Him, the latter drags us ever earthward, into that fearful abyss of stubborn pride, relentless cruelty, remorseless ambition, and Janus-faced treachery, gloating avarice, complex intrigue, and petrifying selfishness; under which pestilential influences the world has become hoary with vice, and wrinkled with sin. But let me not be misunderstood: by sectarianism, I do not mean solely that which appertains to the doctrinal opinions either of the Pharisaical High Church, or the Puritanical Low Churchman, nor of the thousand *ites*, *flights*, *isms*, and *schisms*, branching therefrom; for of this conscience, coinage of men's hearts, as God giveth the stamp, so He alone can warrant the issue. No;

I speak of a *secular* sectarianism, to which every soul amongst us is more or less addicted; a setting up and worshipping of false—yea, verily! *most false*—gods! which has made social idolatry universal. Who can deny that they are, to a certain extent, the slave of some particular passion, each of which passions, when allowed to have dominion over us, becomes an idol? With one, it is pride, with another, sloth, or anger, avarice, ambition, lust, covetousness, intemperance, lying, envy, hatred, or revenge; but to each and all of these, there are but two great High Priests, MAMMON, and his elder brother, SELFISHNESS. It is true, that these idols are never worshipped under these ugly names. No; they have all to be gracefully draped and brightly gilt before they are bowed down to; therefore is it, that the miser, abounding in gold, but lacking all things else, calls his pet vice *prudence*! The coward boasts of his peaceful disposition!—the slothful man of his content! the spendthrift of his generosity! the wine-bibber of his sociality and good fellowship!—and he whose “vaulting ambition o’erleaps itself,” of his indomitable courage and perseverance! Thus, all these ugly vices go masquerading through the world in the costume of the virtues, and as long as they take care not to drop their masks, few are so ill-bred as to question their identity; for, the fear of reprisals is the safety-valve of our social system; and not throwing stones when we ourselves live in glass houses, is the Brummagem article we display for Christian charity! And so it will ever be, as long as each of us have a *sect* or dominant passion of our own, accompanied, as it invariably is, by the most bigoted intolerance against our neighbour’s *sect*, or ruling passion. It is truly and tersely remarked, in a charming little book, called “Friends in Council,” abounding, as a writer in the *Leader* aptly expresses it, in many “an essay in an epigram,”—that “it takes away much of the savour of life, to live amongst those with whom one has not anything like one’s fair value. It may not be mortified vanity, but unsatisfied sympathy, which causes this discomfort.” True, most true;

for, although the world, more especially in the present day, abounds with philanthropy and benevolence, it is a melancholy fact, that every day *sympathy* seems on the decrease. A phrenologist would account for this, on the principle of the duality of the brain, and would tell us that there are many persons who have abundant benevolence, who yet have not an atom of sympathy; true, again, and yet how often are they confounded, and, for that reason, many may ask in what consists their difference? It consists in a very wide one, that of *saying* and *doing*. *BENEVOLENCE* is passive, *SYMPATHY* active; benevolence *pities*, but sympathy *helps*; benevolence professes to feel *for* those who suffer "in mind, body, or estate;" but sympathy feels *with* them; and such being the case, puts its shoulder to the wheel of its neighbour's foundered load, and struggles bravely to extricate it. Sympathy, in short, is *practical* Christianity; and benevolence, theoretical piety. Sympathy is the wayfaring Samaritan, who, though a stranger, and unknown, does not pass over on the other side, but pours oil and wine into our wounds, and ministers to our necessities. Benevolence is the self-righteous Pharisee, ever boasting of the good it has done, and the evil it has left undone. And as all qualities descend from one generation to another—in tribes or races—it is for this reason that relatives or friends may be *benevolent*, and compassionate our misfortunes, as far as *words* go; or even abound in works of supererogation—such as offering our indolence a seventh carriage, if we already possess six; but should we be penniless, and chance to break our leg, and the sixpence has to be sought that would purchase a crutch to support us, *then*, verily, is it from the Samaritan stranger that we must seek it. But, perhaps, there may be, in this still crude stage of the world's progression, a higher and deeper cause for the want of sympathy that is to be found among human beings for each other; for it may be part of the miracle and the mystery that is veiled in the Holy of Holies of every heart, hovering on spirits' wings between the Creator that afflicts, and the creature that is af-

flicted—to prove to them that there is no real sympathy to be hoped for, or found, save from the ONE source from whence *all* flows, and to which *all* is known; it may be at once to reprove, and to reassure the vacillating faith of our tempest-tossed souls; as erst the Saviour did on the sea of Tiberias, that of the trembling disciples. A guarantee, in short, *now*, as then, that He is *there*, and will save us *in*, if not always *from*, the storm. How many daily and hourly proofs have we of this in our internal world, the chronology of which is more rapid, the events more stirring, the dramas more thrilling, the mysteries more sublime, the revolutions more frequent, and the progression more *important*, than any of its faint foreshadowings, which men are wont to misnomer *facts*, in the external and material world, which is but the husk of the spiritual creation; for it is of the *soul's* records that Heaven's archives are composed. It is truly remarked, by the Reverend E. D. Rendell, in his admirable work on Antediluvian History: "How many things there are belonging to our nature, which actually exist a long time before we become properly aware of them! The internal man exists, and we may have this fact declared to us by infallible authority; still we have no right perception of its truth until we begin a course of interior thinking. By this, man attains the evidence of its existence, and then believes." And it is a question whether this course of interior thinking ever *would* begin in many of us, but for affliction, which is the whetstone of all the soul's blunted intelligences; for, by interior thinking, is meant self-examination, with a view to acquiring self-knowledge, and must not be confounded with those mere *intellectual* exhalations, of which even the lowest *moral* natures are capable, and which have often no more to do with the construction of our *higher* and *spiritual* intelligence, than have the vapours that rise from the ocean to do with the great world of waters, beyond a throwing off of its worsed and more evanescent particles. But of the truth of the above remark, of *there being many things belonging to our nature which actually*

exist a long time before we become properly aware of them, we have physical, as well as moral demonstration; for, have we not (though perfectly useless to us there) the germ of all our faculties, passions, and feelings in our mother's womb? and may it not be, that the very highest intellectual pre-eminence that the efforts or ambition of man can attain to in this life, may be compared with the perfection he is destined to arrive at in a future and eternal state, quite as embryo and undeveloped as were the elementary and component attributes of his nature prior to his terrestrial birth? And oh! may it not also be the comparatively narrow confines of its present sphere, that occasions all the throes, struggles and chafings of the future great and emancipated spirit; and causes it to consider the said throes, struggles, and chafings, as so many trials, afflictions, and even unjust persecutions, for want of a broader light to view them by, which would show that each and every struggle was but the germination of the unborn angel? But we must leave the Angel, and return to the Man.

The Archdeacon—whose afternoon discourse, on the score of pleasing Mistress Amy Verner, had fallen so wide of the mark—though Scotch, was not a minister of the Scottish Kirk; but a much greater personage, for he was a canon of St. Paul's, and second cousin—not only to the late Laird of Glenfern, but to the living Lord McToady, a Scottish Peer, who had *boo'd* and *boo'd* himself into that mysterious quantum of social and political influence, which, for the last century and a half, has been a riddle that the Anglo-Saxon is not *Cædipus* enough to solve; and yet is pretty much the same as the Theban one of old—save that the crawling, or going upon all fours, is treated with a difference, and protracted far beyond the commencement of the career. Nevertheless—to his credit be it spoken,—however steep, slippery, or miry the ascent which had to be climbed might be, his Lordship never lost the Celtic virtue of clanship, or pushing the fortunes of his relatives, even to the remotest degree of consanguinity; and hence the two fat livings held by the Reverend Samuel Panmuir.

Indeed, his poor over-worked curate,—once dining at the house of an old college-chum, in one of those social saturnalias that after-dinner confidences are wont to produce—had been heard to observe, in strict secrecy to his host, as he held a glass of rare old port to the light, to watch the beeswing which, like pleasant rumours, floated about it, that, “Had the canon but risen half as early in the morning, as he had done in the Church, the larks themselves never could have been up to him !” Nevertheless, he was not proud—oh, dear, no, not by any means,—for he had presented the little kirk, at Glenfern, with a painted window, which donation had been duly chronicled in all the London, and echoed in all the provincial papers. That he had picked up this piece of antiquity, for a song, in an autumnal tour through the Netherlands, remained a secret to him and the Dutch broker from whom he had bought it; for what the Scripture enjoins with regard to our gifts—namely, not to let our left hand know what our right does, the Reverend Samuel Panmuir extended even to his *bargains*; so that, although the objects of art and *vertu* in his house, were always the most rare and valuable possible—no one ever knew what they had cost—and no wonder; for, as we before said, the Reverend gentleman was not proud; so that not only had he presented to the village kirk this painted window, which set forth in all the mediæval splendours of blue, red, green, and yellow,—the miracle of the loaves and fishes; but he did far more: for once a year, at least—generally about the time that the court moved northward,—he came and dazzled the simple congregation, with all the canonical splendours of a dignitary of the Church; and though albeit, the fane was small, his voice was as sonorous and commanding as if he had been rounding periods to rise in inflated undulations, till they filled the dome of his own magnificent cathedral. Nor was this edifying humility confined to the Church alone; for his social amenity extended beyond its pale, and the illustrious prebend, who in London sipped tokay with princes, did not in his native Highlands disdain to quaff humble

toddy with peasants. His visit to Glenfern this year, had been made earlier than usual, about the beginning of August, instead of the end of September, for it had been occasioned by a domestic tragedy, which had occurred in the Panmuir family—alas! what family is without one, if not more? Though some are unedited, and some not even suspected! The old laird, Muir of Panmuir, as he had been called during *his* father's lifetime, to distinguish him from the Laird of Glenfern, had died of an apoplectic fit, some fourteen months before; leaving an only daughter, who was finishing her education at Paris, and an only son, a gentleman-commoner, at Trinity College, Cambridge, and who, at the period of his father's death, wanted eighteen months of being of age; although among the fastest of the very fast cantabs with whom he associated. Mrs. Panmuir had been dead many years, so that at the laird's death, Edith Panmuir, and her brother Donald, or The Panmuir, as he then became, were orphans. Great had been the preparations at Glenfern, for the coming of age of the young laird. Old Mrs. Dunbar, their maternal grandmother, had been to Paris,—a long journey for her, even in these days of facile locomotion,—and brought back her beautiful granddaughter, Edith, then just entering her eighteenth year, that nothing might be wanting to grace the festivities that were to celebrate young Donald's majority. But alas! as Archy Argil, the old sexton at Glenfern, used crabbedly to twist the truism of "Man proposes, but God disposes"—"Man appoints, but God disappoints;" and, just one little month previous to this long-looked for happy event, Donald Panmuir was drowned, in a rowing match at Cambridge. Nothing, as may be supposed, could equal the consternation of the rest of the boat club, at this sad and most unlooked for event; for even amongst the most heartless associations, any link suddenly severed from the general chain, gives, to say the least of it, a feeling of fear and insecurity, which comes home to each individual as a personal calamity; but, in the present instance, the sorrow was less selfish,

and more universal; for the young man, from his openness of heart and purse, had been a great favourite with all his companions—among whom it was proposed, that one or more should instantly set off for Glenfern, to break the heart-rending tidings to poor Edith and Mrs. Dunbar, and accompany his remains to Scotland. But no one liking so sad a mission, they resolved to cast lots as to the two that should go, for none would consent to being singly the bearer of such fatal news. This point settled, the chances fell to the Honourable Cecil Trevelyon and Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars. The latter was *the* clever man of the term, and had, no doubt, *head* enough to acquit himself creditably, of what, in a worldly point of view, might have been considered a far more important embassy. To say he was the clever man of the term, was to say much; for colleges and public schools have, at particular epochs, their confluent epidemics of embryo celebrities, and Cambridge that year shrouded many a future star of the literary and political hemisphere. Though a fortnight had elapsed, since Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars and his friend had brought the sad tidings, of which they were the bearers, to the now truly bereaved orphan; yet, at Glenfern they still lingered; their pretext was, that they waited for the sale, which was now to take place in about another week; for the young laird having, at the time of his decease, been a minor, he had of course died intestate; and consequently, an immediate sale of all his effects, without reserve, had been ordered by the executors, as the landed property went to a very distant branch of the family. The catalogue included a fine collection of curiously embossed Mediæval plate and *bijouterie*, former gifts of the Stuarts, among which were many sardonyx and jewelled cups, and *écuelles*, the dainty workmanship of Benvenuto Cellini and his pupil, Aschiano, and brought by the ill-fated Mary Stuart from her apartments in the Louvre, during her brilliant but brief residence at the court of Catherine de Medici. But what chiefly attracted the brokers to this sale, was a very splendidly carved table, some high-backed chairs, and *tabourets* of

old mahogany as black as ebony, said, like the dining tables at Westminster School, to have been made out of some of the vessels which had composed the Spanish Armada; and the carving of which was as fine, highly wrought, and elaborate, as any of Grinling Gibbon's marvels. These chairs, tables, and stools, which had cost as a bargain £300—the young laird had fallen in with at Antwerp, and had intended, upon attaining his majority, to present as altarpieces to the church at Glenfern. Considering, therefore, not only the intrinsic, but the conventional interest, attached to this sale, it was, perhaps, very natural that the two cantabs should remain for it; yet, their doing so was to me a source of disquietude; nay, more, ever since their advent, it was as if—

“A great, and mighty shadow had fallen on my heart;”

and no wonder—for “coming events” do, indeed, “cast their shadows before!” but, I must not anticipate.

The ailing Israelite, that Mrs. Verner had alluded to, was a broker of the name of Jacob Jacobs, who, from the overturning of a coach, on his way to Perth, had met with divers contusions, which had disabled him from proceeding on his journey, and caused him to be brought to the nearest place of refuge, which happened to be “The Panmuir Arms;” and even that was three miles across the fields; here, for the last ten days he had been laid up; the accident having occurred on the very evening, when some business connected with poor Donald Panmuir's death, had called me to Edinburgh; and here, on my return, the previous Saturday night (prior to my conversation with Mrs. Amy Verner, in the churchyard), I still found him, and also the two cantabs, whom, from not seeing at Church, I had hoped were gone; but it appeared, they had only gone out for a drive in Mr. Trevylion's tilbury, for on following Mrs. Verner into the inn, I overheard the following colloquy, between Tim, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' stud-groom, and Railton, the Canon's

portly servant, as they puffed a duet together, with a pipe and cigar. The former, having relieved his feelings and expressed his sentiments by flinging his half-smoked weed through the open-window, at the head of a highly respectable drake, who was just waddling down to an opposite pond to organize a little aquatic excursion with his wife and family. The groom, exclaiming, as he hurled the firebrand amongst them,—

“This here Pickwick ain’t worth a fardin.”

He next proceeded to light another, from the bowl of his companion’s pipe ; having achieved this new conflagration, he added, between every cloud of smoke—

“Your master be a near relation, hain’t he, of the young lady, up at the moated house, yander ?—Miss Panmuir, I mean ?”

“Oh, dear, no !—second, or third cousin, or somethink of that sort.”

“Oh, ended ! Well, I’d a notion, as all Scotch relations was near.”

“Why so ?” asked the other, actually removing his pipe from his mouth.

“Cause, all Scotch people is so unkimmen stingy, that I thought they must be *near* relations ; if so be as they was any. Ha, ha, ha ! no offence, Mr. Railton, sir ; I looks towards you.” And with a loud laugh, at his own wit, he raised a can of ale, that stood between them, and drank a large draught.

“Is *your* gent agoing to make any stay in these parts ?” asked Railton, as he emptied the ashes out of his pipe, and proceeded to refill it.

“Ah ! now, *that’s* just like hasking what colour the wind is. It’s not easy to know what my master have done, or *who* he have done ! Ha, ha, ha ! let alone what he means to do. So, yer see, like master, like man ; and as *he* never says, I can’t say, *heither* ; but don’t let us talk of our masters, its so *perdigus* personal ; and personalities, should always be awoided in good *surciety* ; as I heerd Lord Snobsby’s walley say one night at our goose club. But, who’s that elderly gent, though, as I saw

one evening at the moated house, when we first come ! Something like a grey mare, in regard to having black eyes, and a white mane, and tail like. I thought as far as I could see, 'twixt windows and doors, he seemed to keep an unkimmen sharp eye on the young lady. Don't wonder at it, though ; never saw a better forehand in my life—beautiful action—clever head—and pins as clean as a whistle !”

“ You don't mean Parson Fraser ? ”

“ No, no ! I know he by sight ; he wears a brown bob-wig, he do ; no ; the chap I means is tall, and sightly enough ; good knee-up action too—steps out well—must have gone over the ground when he was younger, I should think.”

“ Oh, that !—that's Murray of Brierly,—Alciphron Murray, a friend of the family.”

“ Humph ! don't approve of them there friends of the *family*. If no followers hain't allowed below stairs, I don't see why they should be above stairs ; and these friends of the family as they calls themselves, hain't nothink helse ; honly they goes hup the front stairs, instead of down the hairy steps ; but, for hevery think helse, its hegzacly the same ; they is always a-ferreting-out, and a-poking-their-noses hinto hevery think—a-lurching, and a-poaching like, on hother gents' beats.”

“ Oh ! but Murray, of Brierly, ain't one of that sort,” kindly interposed Mr. Railton : “ I must say, he be quite a gentleman, and a real friend to the Panmuirs ; indeed, it is said, that in his young days there were some love passages between him and the great Perth beauty, Mary Dunbar—Miss Edith's mother ; but the Panmuir was thought a better match for her. To him she married ; and, during her life-time, the Laird of Brierly was always beyond seas, and never came to Glenfern ; but since her death, he has hovered round the place, as an eagle does round a nest of eaglets, when some mishap has befallen the mother bird.”

I turned away faint and sick ; for there is something appalling in finding the holiest secrets of one's life, which one has

kept veiled, as it were, even from oneself, thus suddenly desecrated and bared, in the garish light of day, to every vulgar scrutiny. I gnashed my teeth in very bitterness ; for it seemed as if my guardian angel must have given up his garrison, before HER name could have been so sacrilegiously torn from the innermost sanctuary of my heart, to find utterance in this man's mouth ! Poor fool ! that I was, not to remember that even desolation has its gauds, and that these memories of the past are the bright green mosses growing on the ruins of our hopes, which tempt every passer-by to probe at, and uproot them ! When the sharp agony of this paroxysm had subsided, I pushed self back into its citadel, and securing my soul with stronger bars of endurance, I turned to Edith—for even change of suffering, when we cannot get rid of suffering altogether, is a relief. It was evident to me, from what had fallen from the clever man's clever groom, that the vulture had marked and was careering round the dove-cote. It seemed as plain as if the plan of attack lay traced before me on a chart, that the fast servant had been set to pump the slow and more simple Railton as to what obstacles might be anticipated, or what means of defence existed. I was glad I had overheard this much ; but, besides the impossibility of voluntarily stooping to the degrading rôle of an eaves-dropper, my head swam and my strength deserted me, so that I could have no longer stood in the passage awaiting Mrs. Verner's return, who had gone to see if Mr. Jacob Jacobs felt well enough to receive a visit from me. I therefore turned into a little sitting-room, on the right hand, opposite the bar, where Railton and Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' groom were smoking, and flung myself into an easy, at least into an arm-chair ; where I had not sat long, before, from the open garden-window, a shadow fell across the floor, accompanied by a subdued panting, like that of an incipient steam-engine ; and in another moment the door opened, and the Archdeacon entered, removed his shovel hat, and having, with a snow-white cambric handkerchief redolent of some fragrant odour (which it is to be sup-

posed was that of sanctity), wiped the dew, not exactly of Hermon, from his brow, he extended his almost equally white hand, as he said, on perceiving me,—

“Ah! how d’ye do, Murray? When did you return?”

“Late last night.”

“Seen Edith yet?”

“No; I shall walk over to Glenfern after dinner.”

“For that matter, you can have a seat in my chaise. Why not come over and dine with them? I promised Mrs. Dunbar to do so. Poor things! it’s bad for them to be left too much to themselves.”

“Thank you;—no, not to-day; for I have ordered dinner here.”

“Ah! well, as you please; but the ‘Panmuir Arms’ has no such Burgundy as the Glenfern cellars; and, considering how soon it may pass into the hands of—Heaven knows who, it is a pity not to drink it while it is to be had.”

I smiled at this amiable and considerate precaution, as I replied, that I was also waiting to see the poor Jew, who was lying ill above stairs.

“Oh! well now, really!” cried the reverend gentleman, reddening with virtuous indignation, much after the fashion of a turkey-cock under a more ignoble sentiment, “I cannot conceive how you can tolerate, much less encourage such people; and a Jew *broker*, too!—the very worst of this accursed race!—a set who live upon the spoils of the widow and the orphan, and who, like their prototype, the devil, literally go about, up and down, seeking whom they may devour. Bad as he pretends to be, I’ve no doubt he’ll be quite up to having everything knocked down to him for a mere song, at the sale at Glenfern.”

“In that respect, my dear sir, I don’t see that he would be any worse than the most orthodox Christians; for all persons professedly attend sales for the purpose of obtaining bargains, and I even heard you yourself express a wish that that mag-

nificent altar-table, and the chairs which poor Donald had intended—”

“Oh! that,” interrupted the Canon, stopping me with a waive of his hand, “is another affair: of course, a man must be a fool who don’t try to get as much as he can for his money.”

“The very principle, my dear sir, upon which the Israelites act.”

“Principle! principle, indeed!—a Jew with principle! Ah! well!—yes, if they only stuck to the principle, no one would blame them; but it’s the interest!—confound them—that they take.” And the reverend gentleman paced the room, fillipped his fingers, and altogether enunciated with such high-pressure vehemence, that a mere worldly-minded and secular spectator might have been hurried to the erroneous conclusion that he spoke even more from personal pique than from general philanthropy.

“Alas! my dear sir, I fear it is not only in monetary transactions, but in *all* our worldly affairs, that *interest* interferes so terribly, and often so fatally, with principle.”

The Reverend Samuel Panmuir suddenly came to a full stop in his peripatetics; looked at me with an obliquity of glance that made an admirable ocular note of interrogation, the purport of which was—“*Do you mean that at me, sir?*”—and then, apparently having answered the query to his own satisfaction, he as suddenly resumed his walk, making, however, another pause at the bell, and declaring it was so hot, that he must have some sherry and soda water; saying which, he walked to the door, and putting his head into the passage, and calling “Railton,” ordered the soda-water and his carriage to be got ready at one and the same time. In less than ten minutes the latter was at the door; and its owner had scarcely waived his hand in token of adieu, saying,—

“Well then, I’ll tell them they may expect you after dinner at Glenferri?”

And driven off as soon as I had nodded an assent, before Mrs. Verner re-appeared, twitching her fingers with accelerated speed; an infallible sign that her humour had not improved since our recent conference in the churchyard.

"Hoot Maister Alciphroon," said she, "I beg ye a lent of paredons jist, for leaving ye looming aboot here a' this uncoo lang time; but gin it had been a month o' Sundays, I'd ha waited till I'd seen the back o' that fat Pharisee, as I did na want to hear ony of his unfeeling jibes. I ken very weel lang syne, that there's nae pitting feeling into them that the de'il has taken it oot o'; but if they cannot compassionate, they should nae insult people's misfortunes, for they dinna ken hoo soon it may be their ain turn to gang to the wall; for Fortune is a sorry jade at best, wha often flengs those she trots the highest wi'."

"Very true, my good Mrs. Verner; and, therefore, unlike the rest of her sex, her caprice is her greatest virtue, for but for it, there would be but little or no retributive justice on this side the grave."

"Ah! weel—true, true! mair is the pity, but I jist waited to see the flitting o' Sammy Panmuir, to cam and tell ye, that the puir chiel upstairs will be mickle glad to see you. Eh! but it's a thoosand pities jist that he's nae a Christian, for it seems to me as if he hod plenty o' the right true stuff in him to make one."

"Cannot you," said I, as I followed this worthy woman upstairs, to the sick man's room, "get him a step beyond King Agrippa, and *quite* persuade him to be one?"

"Wa'd to the Laird that I could, and a far greater credit too to ony kirk, militant or itherwise, thon sic a puffed up popin-jay as Sammy Panmuir, wha has not above ain baubee's worth of Christianity, if he ha that same, to twenty tons of pride and hypocrisy?"

"I hope at all events, Mrs. Verner," said I, as we stopped before Mr. Jacob Jacobs' door, "that *that* is *below proof*, if nothing else at the Panmuir Arms is?"

"Nae a bit o' it, Murray, nae a bit o' it; and the de'il, as head o' the excise, for a' sic illicit spirits, is welcome to guage him as soon as possible, and the sooner the better," laughed the hostess.

"Nay, friend Amy, that speech is unworthy of so good a woman."

"Like enoo', Murray, for it's nae possible to fit avery ane wi' the same cap; but it's a capital coif for Sammy Panmuir, so ye mun aye let him wear it."

The knock at the bedroom door, which accompanied this last speech, having been answered by a "Come in," from its inmate, we entered, and found the invalid sitting in an easy chair, by the open window; his left arm only in a sling; and his face, which was a singularly mild and benevolent one, with not much of the Hebrew type in it either, bearing no greater marks of his recent accident, than a more than ordinary degree of pallor and languor. He made an effort to rise on our entrance, which I of course prevented; and then drawing a chair near to his, after condoling with him upon his accident, I asked him if he had been on his way to attend the sale at Glenfern, when it had occurred."

"No," said he, "for at the time the Perth coach overturned, I was not aware there was to be such a sale, but now, as I *am* here, and it is to take place next week, I shall certainly remain for it; for, thanks to my good friend Mrs. Verner's admirable nursing, I feel I shall be quite myself by the time it takes place. Dear me! what a very melancholy way the poor young laird came to his death,—out on a party of pleasure, I understand, at some rowing match; and so near his coming of age too; really I don't know when I have heard anything more lamentable, more grievously distressing!"

I passed my hand over my eyes, as the image of poor young Donald—one moment in all the pride of youth and beauty, and fresh with budding hopes, and the next a pale corse, no longer *on* but *in* the earth—rose up before me.

"Pardon me, sir, I distress you?" said the Israelite.

"No, not *you*; but it *was* a terrible blow to come upon a family without any warning."

"And yet," rejoined Jacobs, "though no believer in second-sight myself, or even in omens, those two circumstances *were* very extraordinary."

"What two circumstances?" said I, looking from the last speaker to Mrs. Verner.

"Eh! weel, ye see, Murray," said the latter, "I never told you for twa reasons; first, for fear o' fashing ye, and next, because ye nae believe in them sort of forerunners."

"What forerunners? If you mean presentiments," said I, with a sigh, "I fear I only believe too much in them."

"Nae, nae; I mean secondsight, and supernatural occurrences, and sic like; and believe it or not, Murray, but the very day the young laird was drooned at the English College, as Meggie Armstrong was crossing the drawbridge, what should she see but the young laird's wraith dragged oot of the moat, pale as death, and wringing wet; and she ran shrieking into the hoose, telling what she'd seen; and all their care was to keep the fatal news from puir Miss Edith, for they knew then the young laird was dead. But they might hae saved themselves the trouble, for that very same day and hōur, as she was walking by the lake in noonday, the sun high in the heavens, not a breath of air, nor a ripple on the waters, doon falls uprooted, as if by magic! a giant oak; not one of the old, hollow-trunked ones either, but a young, green, sturdy tree, full of life and sap. Nor was this all: between some of the top branches, which fell towards Miss Edith, was a bird's nest, from which the auld birds were flown, and a' the eggs bra'ken in the fall, and from which, hooever it came there, floating like a death-flag, was a rag o' black crape. Noo, Murray, what say you to *that*? For ye ken weel the legend of the Panmuirs, that whenever the head of the family is ganging to dee, a tree is sure to fall; we hae seen it oorsels wi' *twa* generations, and this *ane* makes a third."

I saw in it, indeed, more than I cared to own; for in the ruined nest, with the ominous black signal fluttering from it, I foresaw poor Edith's yet unacted portion of the tragedy! A shudder ran through me; but I made no answer. Apparently the former was more satisfactory to Mrs. Verner, who said,—

“Eh! weel, I'm glad to see ye believe in these telegraphs from the land o' the Lile at last.”

Not caring to let the good woman see the extent of the impression her legend of the fallen tree had made upon me, I turned to the invalid, and entered into general conversation with him; and a most intelligent, well-informed, liberal-minded person I found him. Benevolent, without any of the cant of benevolence, which, next to that of piety, is the most offensive, because the most contradictory of all; for the same reason that “good wine needs no bush,” true philanthropy and genuine piety need no jargon; for, where the reality exists, the ostentatious insignias of them are superfluous: *all* genuine feelings seek and find a vent in *action*, rather than in words. It is not recorded that the poor sinful woman who entered into the Pharisee's house, uttered *one word* either of repentance or of supplication; we are merely told what she *did*—she washed the Saviour's feet with her tears, dried them with her hair and her kisses, and *gave Him the most precious thing she possessed*, namely, a costly unguent out of an alabaster box—so costly that the more self-righteous and greater professors of the law marvelled, and murmured at her extravagance! They did so then, and would do so tenfold now! But hear the words of Christ; and judge how He appreciated the *deed* above the *word*:—

“*And Jesus answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. • And he saith, Master, say on.*

“*There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty.*

“*And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?*

"Simon answered and said, I suppose that He to whom he forgave most. And He said unto him, thou hast rightly judged.

"And He turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, seest thou this woman? I entered into this house; thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

"Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

"My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

"Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much."

And to go from sacred to profane history, Curtius did not talk patriotism to the Roman people, but devoted himself to the Manes by plunging into the mysterious gulf,—and thus, for the good of his country, stopping the fatal gap in the Forum; instead of pointing out, and expatiating upon, in interminable harangues, the *other* non-forthcoming individual who *should* have done so. These thoughts were suggested to me by several facts—not *sentiments*—which had fallen from the Israelite, in the course of conversation; and caused me to be of Amy Verner's opinion, that it was a pity, his virtues being Christian, the man was not so likewise. I could have sat with him much longer, even at the risk of fatiguing him, had not my dinner been announced. After which I had to walk to Glenfern. I had purposely delayed doing so till the evening, for I could not bear to look upon so much sorrow in broad daylight. I therefore rose, and took my leave of Jacob Jacobs, shaking him cordially by the hand, and volunteering to repeat my visit on the following day,—if he would not deem it an intrusion; but he having negatived the latter clause, and frankly accepted my proposition, I descended to my solitary meal, which in the present instance was more a matter of form than necessity; for appetite I had none, though surrounded by all the allurements

of one of Mrs. Verner's epicurean little dinners ; for among her other sterling good qualities, she possessed the most requisite and attractive, though, alas ! now-a-days the most neglected of female attributes, that of being an excellent housewife, which is a sort of domestic magic wand, that when skilfully wielded dispels all the chill, dreary miasmas of disorder and provision-spoiling, and raises up in their stead, a fairy land of comfort and well-being.

The Jew and the Gentile.

SECTION II.

THE HOUSE OF MOURNING.

"Teach me to do thy will."—Ps. cxlvi. 10.

LEAVING the "Panmuir Arms" as the shades of evening had flung their mourning mantle of twilight over the heretofore joyous and smiling landscape, I turned down the glen that led to the moated house, as Glenfern was called by the peasantry. The heather with which it was carpeted, was as soft and elastic as ever; there seemed neither death, nor dearth to dim *its* free, wild, fresh, eternal, ever-springing youth; and as the night-wind tossed its purple flowers buoyantly, now high, now low, in mimic waves across the sward, they floated with the proud and bysine grace of a young monarch's regal robes. Oh, great mystery of heaven! and sad, sad antithesis of earth! why must every passing hour bring forth its twins of Life and Death?

No marriage-bell rings merrily out, but on the self-same gale must toll another's dirge; and for every side that laughter splits, sorrow breaks some aching heart! and yet when all seems the work of a beneficent being, how account for this compulsory want of sympathy throughout creation? How, indeed!—unless that all things here below are for a stated time under the iron yoke of that most fell of all tyrants, *Necessity*;

and that at all events, it is not for us, the creatures, to criticise the antilogy of the Creator. As I walked on, the gloom of my own thoughts, deepening faster than that of the evening, I felt disposed to quarrel with every sound, however distant, that broke the solemn and respectful silence, which appeared to me, ought to environ that now desolate house. Even the lowing of the cattle, and the cow-boy's whistle, as they came across the glen, annoyed me. I quickened my pace to get beyond their reach, but when I arrived at the iron gates, beyond the draw-bridge, I had not courage to ring the bell; for at all times there was something startling in its deep tone, and now it would have sounded through the dark and hollow stillness of that silent house, like a summons to the dead.

So I turned away, and directed my steps to a secluded spot, appropriately called the Wilderness, where was situated the mausoleum of the Panmuirs, of which poor Donald was now the last inmate. For many years, the rank luxuriance of the weeds had been left perfectly and purposely undisturbed, and the sarcophagus had been built between two gigantic yew-trees, of enormous girth, said to be thirteen hundred years old; and as that is but a small span of life among the dead, it is very likely to have been the case. There was also, as in the old Saxon burying-grounds, a lych gate under which every corpse passed, and between the pillars of which it trysted, prior to proceeding to its last resting-place.

I had now reached this gate; it was a modern antique, quite out of character with the rest of the place, and therefore in bad taste; for *harmony* in *all* things—living, or inanimate—silent, or vocal—alone constitutes beauty; and this arch was of the pompous classic, supported by two Corinthian capitals; for Stuart Panmuir, Edith's grandfather, had lived with *Prince Charlie* (for he was no Pretender, so we will not style him such) at Florence, and Rome, till the death of the latter; and had returned home with a classic fever, and Pontine ague, from which the poor old place at Glenfern would have suffered con-

siderably, had not Death, that great reader of all human riot acts, put a stop to his proceedings, just as the above-mentioned arch was completed, the capitals of whose pillars were, however, both redeemed and embellished by the finest *real* acanthus I have ever seen out of Syria, or Greece; for it was the very—not abomination, but—luxuriance of desolation. As I waded through the dank and tangled grass, I suddenly felt a counter-acting movement within it, which caused it to knot in eddies, as it were, around my ancles, and greatly impeded my progress. Had I been either in a prairie, or a wigwam, I should, from the strange, creeping advance of some living thing, most assuredly have anticipated the approach of a serpent; and as it was, I was by no means sure that it was not something of the sort, under the milder phase of a snake. Influenced by this impression, which was every instant becoming stronger, I hastily seized, and broke off, a stout branch of cypress, as the only weapon within my reach; and stood on the defensive, awaiting the expected foe; when lo! by the pale light of the just-rising moon—as its rays streamed athwart the dense foliage of the surrounding funeral trees—I perceived that a way was cleft through the grass, though not by me; and that which I had mistaken for a wily reptile, turned out to be an honest, faithful dog—even the faithful greyhound of poor Donald Panmuir. The animal continued to crouch till he came close to me, and then gently lifted up his head, without uttering a sound, and licked my hand, while he trembled violently.

“Poor Eös! poor fellow!” said I, first patting his head, and then, as I took one of his icy-cold trembling ears in each of my hands, stooping down to kiss the good creature for his human sense, and more than human love—“So, my poor dog, the great archer’s shaft has come even unto you, and there’s not a bound or a bark left in you; but we must bear it, my man, we must bear it. We are all born to reverses, Eös, but such as I am, I’ll be your friend, and you shall be mine. We both loved poor Donald well, and that shall be the first bond between you and *me*,”

At the mention of his master's name, the poor animal sprang up, and put his paws on my shoulders, and for the first time uttered a low moan, as the next moment he relaxed his embrace, and again crouched down tremblingly at my feet, thus saying plainly,—

“Oh, no, you are very kind, but you are not he.”

“No, my poor fellow, I am not,” said I, replying to the dog's thought, which his dumb show had so forcibly and touchingly expressed; “but I *was* his friend, and will be *yours*, so rouse up, and come with me to the house, or else we shall find the garden-gate locked.”

So saying, I walked on a few steps, whistling Eös after me; but instead of following, he rose up, and looked wistfully in the opposite direction; at length, however, he came after me, but it was only to pull me by the skirts of my coat, and forcibly insist upon my going his way, instead of his coming mine; and his way was towards the little chapel, in front of which was the mausoleum, and both were at the other, or eastern extremity of the wilderness.

“Well, Eös,” said I, finding he persisted in his efforts to draw me the other way, “as in all partnerships there should be mutual concessions, I will not begin ours by thwarting you, and refusing your first request.” And with this I turned back, and the dog, after having licked my hand, and given a little whine of satisfaction, darted forward with a bound, but soon slackening his pace, kept turning back every now and then to see that I followed. I began to ponder what his meaning could be, and concluded that it was a piece of canine sentiment; and that feeling he had too much grief for one poor heart to bear, he wanted me to come and help him to mourn at his master's grave; but on arriving at the mausoleum, I soon became aware of the sagacious creature's real motive in bringing me thither, for the doors were open (an unusual circumstance), and by the faint glimmering sepulchral light of the suspended lamp, which always burnt within, I beheld the form of Edith Paumuir,

thrown, in an agony of grief, across her brother's coffin. The rustling of my footsteps among the dried leaves and long grass, as I approached, roused her, and she started up, leaning on one elbow, and looked wildly around, like a deer at bay. At length, perceiving that it was me, she sprang forward, and convulsively seizing both my arms, exclaimed,—

“Oh, it's you, Murray, come at last; thank God. Oh, tell me that he is *not* dead, that it is all false—a horrid mockery—a bad jest, invented by cruelty, and perpetrated by folly, to prevent my being too much overjoyed at seeing Donald again. Yes, yes; you heard in Edinburgh that he was *not* dead; is it not so? Tell me, tell me quickly, if you don't want to kill *me* too, Alciphron.”

As she hurriedly gasped out these wild fitful words, she kept passing her hands searchingly over my coat, as if she thought I had brought back with me from my short journey, some precious talisman that was to assure her of her brother's existence; but poor soul! finding nothing—what else does misery ever find?—she again almost shrieked as her head fell upon my shoulder,—

“Murray; I charge you to end this shameful mockery; and tell me quickly that Donald lives!”

“Yes, dear Edith, he does indeed live! and that freed from all the change—the chance—the sin—the sorrow—of this wretched life,” sighed I, as I at length succeeded in arresting within my grasp her small burning hands.

“I knew it!” cried she, with a loud hysterical laugh—her poor wandering brain having seized the sound of the first sentence I had uttered without its import; but the illusion was a merciful one, and gave a happy turn to her delirium, for she was in a high fever. Possessed by the erroneous idea that her brother still lived in *this* world, I had now no difficulty in leading her away from his grave towards the house; and having locked the door of the mausoleum, and put the key in my pocket, I led or rather dragged her forward, with one arm around her

waist, for she could not have supported herself; her wild laugh, and still wilder plans for welcoming poor Donald back to Glenferri, wringing my heart, till my own brain almost reeled under the ordeal. Poor Eös followed, his ears back, and his tail down, with his whole weight of honest grief sinking deeper and deeper into his dog's heart, without even a febrile illusion to lighten it. When we reached the lych gate the moon had surmounted every cloud, and shone out in all her splendour.

"See, see!" cried Edith, suddenly stopping, and raising her head from my shoulder, as she pointed up at it; "how bright and beautiful! they are making everything for Donald; dead, indeed!—oh, but it was a cruel jest; but never mind, it's over now, and they can't prevent his coming—no!—no!—" *"Il reviendra demain!"* And she warbled out in her exquisitely clear, silvery, and touching voice, that pretty and most pathetic of French romances which bears the name of those words; and then seizing a branch of cypress upon which the dew-drops in the moonlight sparkled like diamonds, she wreathed it round her hair, saying—

"Ah! this is what I must wear; no roses for me, for Donald always puts ivy in my hair; he says he likes green and gold—gold! gold! Oh! how fine I shall be to-morrow! *car—"Il reviendra demain!"*

And as she sang, she let down her magnificent hair, which indeed fell in showers of rippling gold about her shoulders. It was difficult to tell which was the most fearful!—her beauty or her insanity, as she stood there in her black dress, and her radiant hair, flowing like a mantle around her, beneath that pale pure light, and within that solemn arch—a fitting frame for such a picture! There was in Edith Panmuir

"A blending of all beauties."

The sculptor who studied form alone, would have found it realized here beyond his most etherealized *ideal*; and the paint-

er who sought for colouring and expression, would have had his very "*Eureka!*" silenced by the difficulty of selection—such a prodigality was there of both; while the lover!—that always magniloquent incarnation of egotism, who, Narcissus-like, ever seeks the reflection of his own image, would, in the hyaline of her deep nature, have found an element sufficiently pure to mirror back the softened self of his worship. In looking at her, admiration hovered like a bee, from the beauty of one feature to that of another, not knowing which to dwell upon as the sweetest; though in the deep violet eyes with their snowy lids and long dark lashes, through which a golden ray darted, lay the argument of that sublime epic, her face—a face which if Praxiteles might have modelled the outline, Prometheus had undoubtedly dropped the spark which illumined it. Another and rarer loveliness Edith also possessed, which was an enchanting expression of *teeth*, as well as of mouth, they were so pearl-like, so symmetrically even, and so exquisitely arched in her head; and to all this was added that *soul* of beauty—GRACE, without which, however perfect it may be in its elements, it is after all but an unfinished, unanimated mass of clay. Often when I had contemplated this

"Fatal gift of beauty,"

had I speculated as to whose prey it might become, for, with the rapidly increasing selfishness of men and the crooked conventionalities of society, the woman—at least the woman endowed as Edith Panmuir was—who is *not* a prey to some tyrant or to some profligate—is but the exception that proves the rule; and now, as I gazed with a riven heart upon the temporary overthrow of the light within which lit up this wondrous regalia of Nature's diadem, Beauty, I almost doubted if it would not be better, that it should become permanent, if even so appalling an alternative could save her from the other and worsèr fate. At length, after much soothing and persuasion, I got her

back to the house, but rambling wildly all the way about the great things that were to be done on Donald's return, and exclaiming every now and then—

“Oh! I am so happy! *too* happy!”

I did not doubt it; for what is all human happiness but a temporary delirium, a friendly mirage, which by inspiring us with a little false hope, gives us courage to push on through life's desert, towards those bright waters after which the heart panteth, but which ever vanish into empty air at our approach.

On reaching the house, I found Mina, a French girl, Edith's maid, and with her assistance, got her up stairs to her bedroom; there leaving her, I despatched a man and horse to Perth for Dr. McAlpine, ordering him, though it was a long twelve miles, never to draw bridle till he arrived. It was a relief to me to hear that the Archdeacon was still continuing his assiduities to the Panmuir Burgundy, that was soon to pass into the hands of the Philistines; for I was in no mood to support his orthodox common-places, or the cauterized fortitude with which he bore the bereavement which had befallen his relatives. Therefore, I hurriedly laid my hand upon old Anderson, the butler's arm, as he was about to open the dining-room door, and usher me into it.

“No, no,” said I, “I've seen the Archdeacon this morning; where is Mrs. Dunbar? I'll go to her.”

“Eh, weel, puir soul, she's where she always is, wi' her Bible, in the little oak breakfast room, praying God to help her up wi' her burden, just, for ye ken weel sir thot He wha' lays it on, can alone lift it off.”

“True, Anderson; and it is a blessing to think that she knows this too, when such a blight has fallen upon the winter of her life, poor soul. But has she seen no one?”

“Eh, weel, yes, they baith saw, and had a prachement from his Raverence the Archdeacon this afternune; and it was after that that puir Miss Edith took on sae, and made awa wi' hersel to the Laird's grave, where ye found her, puir chiel; and Mrs.

Dunbar has done nae thing but flow oot at the een lik a fountain just aver sin his Raverence had us a' up ond prached to us."

"For heaven's sake, what did he say, so to have added to their distress?"

"Eh, sir, ye dinna I *hop thenk*," said Anderson, turning his head on one side, and extending his hands in a deprecating manner "that the likes o' me wad hae the presumption to stick oop my capacity into thinking it cud possibly understand what a grand gentlemon like his Raverence the Archdeacon wad say; but ane thing he made plain to us a', which was, that it was just for a judgment upon a' oor wickedness that God hod cut off the Young Laird, in the flower of his youth; and then to comfort us he read us a' the damnatory passages oot of St. Paul; after which, he left us to dress the blister for oorsels; puir Mrs. Dunbar tried to do so, wi' a little healing from Christ, which did a' the rest o' us a warld o' good; but his Raverence had so probed puir Miss Edith to the quick that there was no bringing her to."

As I followed Anderson to the little oak room, I saw at once how the matter stood; the fact was, the Archdeacon was a sort of clerical San Grado; he had but two remedies for all cases—bleeding and hot water. To probe every wound and parboil every hope, was his grand panacea; and this violent practice he treated quite as a matter of course, like the farrier whom Sir Walter Scott mentions, as having set up for a physician, who said *he* never used anything but *simples*, to wit, "*laudemy* and *calomy*" (laudanum and calomel); and it was very evident, in the present instance, that the Reverend gentleman's theological *laudemy* and *calomy* had driven a poor young person to the verge of insanity, and brought an old one a stage nearer to "that bourne from whence no traveller returns."

When I entered the breakfast room, the poor old lady was sitting with her pale placid face and whilome handsome eyes fixed on an open page of the large family Bible—the Bible, with

its embossed black leather binding, and massive silver corners and clasps, in which for the last three hundred years the birth and death of every Panmuir of Glenfern had been recorded. One tear, and one only, lingered on her venerable cheek—for the tears of age, like those of childhood, dry quickly. As Time is more merciful than most spoilers, and wheresoever he uproots a blessing, he breathes with his icy breath upon the vacuum, and thus sears the rent, the torture of which would otherwise be insupportable. Her figure, still slight, and very little bent, considering her age, looked almost shadowy in the black dress for which she had exchanged her usual silver grey; but she still retained the clear white lawn kerchief she always wore on her shoulders, pinned in a point at the back of her waist, and a coif of the same material, which in shape was a sort of honorary widow's cap, and harmonized admirably with her silver hair. As soon as I had closed the door, she extended her right hand to me; and removing her spectacles with the other, she pointed with them to a verse in the open volume before her, which was the second of Corinthians vii. 6.

"God that comforteth those that are cast down."

"Is it not so, Murray?" said she, in a broken and tremulous voice.

"Indeed is it, my dear madam," replied I, briefly; for I felt there *was* no other comfort for our great sorrow.

"And yet," resumed she, almost in a whisper, as if she thought there was something impious in the assertion which forbade its being uttered aloud, "He has cast *us* down *very* low, Alciphron." On the table, beside the Bible, was lying a volume of sermons and a little viaticum of comfort by the Rev. James Smith, entitled "DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR THE LORD'S HOUSEHOLD."

My heart was too full to trust my own words, which could but echo its heaviness; so taking up this invaluable little book, I sat down beside her, and answered her from it. The passage I selected was headed with this verse from Isaiah, ix. 20:—

"*The days of thy mourning shall be ended.*" And then went on to say:—

"Here we have much to cause us to mourn: The state of the world and of the church; many things in the domestic circle; the deep depravity of our own hearts; our evil tempers and passions; the temptations and fiery darts of Satan; the losses, crosses, and privations which we are called upon to endure; the hiding of the Lord's face; the want of brighter evidences; weakness and pain of body. All these things conspire to make us sorrowful; so that with David, we sometimes say, 'I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all day long.' But there is a bright prospect before us; our mourning season will soon be over: if we now sow in tears, we shall reap in joy. The days of our mourning will soon be ended. Then shall we have light without darkness, holiness without sin, joy without sorrow, service without toil, the eternal sunshine of our Father's love without an intervening cloud. We shall soon shed the last tear, breathe the last sigh, utter the last groan, express the last wish, and feel the last pain, and then all beyond will be holiness, happiness, and perfect blessedness."

"A few more days, or months, or years,
In this dark desert to complain;
A few more sighs, a few more tears,
And we shall bid adieu to pain."

"Thank you, Murray, thank you, and I above all am wrong to repine, for *my* days of mourning will be sooner ended than any of yours: and then I shall see them all again! That poor boy, Donald, with his handsome, bright, happy face, and my poor Mary, too! You loved Mary, Alciphron, and I've often and often wished that she had been your wife; I think you'd have made her happier than Muir Panmuir did; but her father willed it otherwise. Well, well, there's no use in wishing; what's done is done; what's gone is gone; and for what is to come

hereafter the Lord be praised. But where is Edith, poor child ? ”

“ Gone to bed, ma’am. She’s not very well.”

“ Not well ! She going to be ill ?—perhaps to die, too. Good Lord ! good Lord ! No, not another ; not another, pray ! Spare *this* one ; the last, the only one ! ”

And as she wrung her trembling hands, and lowered her again streaming eyes, she rose up and tottered towards the door, saying she would go to her directly.

Anxious to spare her this additional shock, and, if possible, to get her to bed before Dr. McAlpine arrived, I followed, and entreated her not to do so ; saying that Edith was a little feverish, and that a good night’s rest would be the best thing for her ; and therefore she had better not, on any account, disturb her.

“ Murray, tell me the truth,” said she, laying her thin, shadowy hand upon my arm, and looking into my face with the most heart-breaking and piteous expression ; “ do you think she will die ? ”

“ No, I do not,” said I, resolutely ; “ but it is little matter what *I* think. You know, my dear Mrs. Dunbar, as well as I can tell you, in whose hands are the issues of life and death ; look up to Him, as you have always done, with faith, and He will look down upon you with mercy. If we could but bear in mind that the nearest way to God is through a great sorrow, we should rejoice, even in tribulation ; but we cannot, nor is it natural that we should ; we wince too much under the present pain of the trial to contemplate its future immunities, and I firmly believe that it is *intended we should do so* ; for the unerring wisdom of the Eternal would not send us stripes that He did not mean us to *feel* ; but it is one thing to smart under chastisement, and another to rebel against it ; the *latter* alone is sinful. *All* our passions have been given us to *use*, and not to lie dormant ; it is the abuse of them only that is reprehensible. Anger itself, up to a certain point, is allowable ; for this

we have the Saviour's warrant; for what was his reproof to Peter when the latter smote the High Priest?—"Be ye angry, but sin not;" which was as if he had said, you may be roused into the feeling of anger, for it is human so to be; but you must not *act* on your anger, for in *that* consists the wrong; *action* being the die that gives currency to, and stamps the amount, both of virtue and of vice. Moral axioms are not morality, any more than the marble in the quarry is either a palace or a cathedral; and there is as much difference between fine sentiments and amiability as there is between a packet of mignonette seed (though therein the globules be in myriads) and the delicious perfume of the *smallest* matured and cultivated sprig of the flower. But, as immortal creatures, dear Mrs. Dunbar, *our* great consolation, under the most poignant sorrows, is, or ought to be, that we *know* that *none* have entered into Canaan but those whom God has first constrained to pass through the wilderness."

"True, Murray, true; and I stand reproved; and yet I remember, when I was a girl, hearing old Dunbar, of Cedar Idris, my husband's father, say, that he could drink to almost any extent without feeling the worse for it, as long as he drank but of one wine or one spirit; but the moment he mixed them his brain reeled, and he felt unnerved for a week after. And I think it is with many sorrows as with many wines—singly, one might bear up under the heaviest of them, but it is the *number*, Alciphron, that come warring and battling in one's poor heart, which indeed causes the brain to reel, and unhinges the whole being."

"Not so," rejoined I, shaking my head; "for, as in a multitude of councillors there is wisdom, depend upon it so is there also in a multitude of sorrows; for the Creator is not only a great chemist, who knows how to extract antidotes from every poison, but also a wondrous alchemist, who, from this earthen crucible of human sorrow, extracts pure ore from the dross of our hearts; and there is not a tear that we shed but what,

passed through the alembic of his mercy, flows on before us into waters of eternal life."

"You are right, Alciphron."

"No, not I, but God. And now, my dear madam, I'm going to ask you to give me a cup of tea, unless you do not like to ring for it till the Archdeacon arrives from the dining-room."

"Oh!" said the poor old lady, rising with a sort of shudder, as she scrambled her pocket handkerchief, snuff-box, and spectacles hastily together, "I could not see Samuel Panmuir again to-day if you were to give me the world! Neither will he come here; for I told them to take him tea into the drawing-room when he left the dining-room; and lest he should be offended at none of us being there, do go, Murray, and join him. And now, as you say I'm not to disturb Edith, I'll go to bed; so good night, and God bless you for the words of comfort you have spoken to me; for the sympathy that flows out of the same grief always goes more home to one's heart than any mere wordy commiseration can do."

"Good night; God bless and comfort you." And as I lit her chamber candle for her, I rejoiced that she would be out of the way before Dr. McAlpine arrived. When we labour under a great grief, it is astonishing the weight we attach to nothings, and the symbolic importance the merest trifles assume; in lighting the hand-candle a large drop of wax fell upon the candlestick—

"See that, now! Murray," said Mrs. Dunbar, as her own tears began to flow afresh, "the very lights seem to weep for poor Donald! And that poor dog, Eös, there is no getting him away from his grave, and even the food they take him there remains untouched."

"Poor fellow! I succeeded in getting him into the house to-night." But I did not add, that, like a Sister of Charity, he was now watching by Edith's bedside. After again exchanging adieus, I went to the drawing-room, where the lights were lit, and on the table, at one side, were placed the Archdeacon's

large Bible and Common-Prayer book, in their pompous bindings of scarlet morocco and gold, with purple markers fringed with gold : also a thick volume of his own sermons, which (out of singularity, no doubt) he preferred to any others ; these were bound in solemn, orthodox black, and with a hymn book, and a "*Pietas Privatus*," completed the paraphernalia for family prayers. But as in all the reverend gentleman's arrangements, the world (naughty as it is) never was totally excluded ; though far be it from us to say that "the flesh and the Devil" filled up any of the interstices. At the other end of the table were strewn a few orthodox, Church and State, and virtuously intolerant papers, such as the *John Bull*, and some of its contemporaries, which the morning's post had brought him, at once to solace and fill up the vacuum of his retirement.

But on a small work-table, beside a chaise lounge, where Edith generally sat, and close to a long, lily-shaped, white Bohemian glass filled with flowers, was a packet that had far more interest for me, because I had at once a fear and a presentiment of the quarter from whence it came. It was a small volume, sealed up with black wax—evidently containing a note within it,—and simply directed—"To Miss Panmuir, Glenfern."

The hand was one of those sort of Brummagem-German hands, now so rife, meant to look cramped and clever, and which, if there is anything in graphiology, so far succeed that they have that great requisite for all worldly cleverness in their character, namely, a total absence of any high moral feeling or broad generosity of nature. I turned this packet in every direction, and, upon looking at the seal, found it to contain merely the device of a moth hovering round a star, without any motto ; indeed, it needed none ; it spoke for itself—being what our heraldic forefathers called a *devise parlante*—"with this difference," said I, aloud, in answer to my own thoughts, "that I fancy *you* intend that poor Edith should play the part of the moth." I rang the bell, ostensibly for a glass of water, but, in reality, to question Anderson, touching the where and from

whom of this packet—a proceeding of which I^{*} was half ashamed, and yet I felt that the end justified the means. I was aware that Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' prize poem had made some sensation at Cambridge. This was a small volume; but no, no, no—impossible! He might, as far as want of feeling went, have been quite capable of the clumsy bad taste of endeavouring to make approaches to an intimacy with Edith, by presenting her with his “very promising” prize poem at such a moment; but, as a clever man, like all clever people, he must have had too keen a sense of the ridiculous for any such mode of proceeding; as, in all the conventionalities and proprieties of life, the head is quite capable of supplying the place of the heart; and, indeed, for that matter, is a far nicer observer of both the one and the other, than the latter. Still, it *was* a volume of some sort, and, moreover, had been made the medium of a note; and, as such, was evidently the first preliminary towards attempting a correspondence. So, again taking the packet carelessly in my hand, as soon as Anderson had brought the water, I said to him—

“I suppose this has only just come for Miss Panmuir, as I see it is not opened?”

“Eh, weel—no sir—it's *bin* here a matter o' twa days and mair; that flippant chap of a groom of aine of the English gentlemen brought it; I mean they that brought back the puir young laird's remains, and the aine that sent that—I think they ca'—Maister Ponsonby Ferrars.”

“Then why did you not give the packet to Miss Panmuir?”

“Eh! I did, sir, the minute it came; but she just flung it doon where ye foond it, whan I told her wha it coome fram, and went off into a deluge o' tears, till I thought the puir bairn wad a droonded hersel', and she's taken nae notice o' it ever syne.”

“Thank Heaven!” thought I; “it is to be hoped that she was disgusted at his, under *any pretext*, intruding at this early

stage upon her sorrow. Alas! I did not then reflect that none would be 'wise as serpents,' were there not others 'guileless as doves!'"

But at this crisis of my premature gratulations, the folding-doors of the room were thrown open, and, preceded by Railton and another servant, each holding a light in regal fashion (except that they did not adopt any retrograde, crab-like movements), the Archdeacon entered—a gentle, little, homœopathic pomposity in the rustling of his garments, and the slight creaking of his shoes, being the obligato accompaniment of that *scena*, with a sort of flourish of trumpets' finale, in the guise of three sonorous "A-HEMS!" which were doubtless intended charitably to preclude the possibility of any one's being caught napping.

In the heightened tint of the cheeks, and the somewhat somnulent drooping of the eyelids, were tokens that the parting between Samuel Panmuir and the Glenfern Burgundy had been a protracted one: thus verifying the assertion of the song, that

"Parting is such sweet sorrow,"

and, with a slight chronological variation, by no means omitting the rhyme of "to-morrow."

Everything about the reverend gentleman's dress, manner, and deportment, proved his horror of innovation—which, indeed, with him, was the synonyme of heterodoxy; so that, even the most indispensable, though least cherubimical of his garments, being constructed upon the old aboriginal plan, enabled him to form an excellent substitute for gloves at his girdle, by making at once a refuge and a resting-place for three fingers of each hand, while the little fingers and thumbs, disdaining such inglorious ease, occupied the outposts.

"Ah! Murray, glad to see you; how d'ye do again? been long here?" said he, extending one finger to me, with a half-patronizing, half-plethoric air.

"Not very."

And then, walking to the grate, passing the skirts of his coat over his arms, and turning his back to it (although there was no fire)—that being as indispensable a proceeding to an Englishman (which means English, Irish, and Scotch) as turning round three times is to a dog before he lies down—he said, after three more "A-HEMS!"

"I wonder if the ladies mean to give us any tea?"

"Mrs. Dunbar begged we would ring for it; for she is gone to bed; and Edith is so ill, that I have been obliged to send off an express for Dr. McAlpine."

"Dear, dear, dear! that is very sad," said the reverend gentleman, as he walked to the table, snuffed the candles, drew forth his snowy handkerchief, carefully wiped his gold-rimmed double eye-glasses, and possessed himself of "The John Bull," preparatory to ensconcing himself in an easy chair. "I was in hopes, that my morning's discourse had convinced her of the sinfulness of giving way to excessive grief;" and here, he turned the first page of the newspaper, and indulged in a strange walrus sort of breathing, something between a subdued snore, and the purring of a cat, after which he added, at the same time flipping a minute particle of the skin of a peach from the frill of his shirt (for, of *course*, he wore shirt-frills, and those of the largest), "but when I get her to London, the change of scene; the total novelty of the whole thing; and, eventually, the pleasures of society, will be more efficacious, in restoring her mind to its proper calibre, than anything."

Here he took a pinch of snuff; while his little finger, as if at once amazed, and charmed, by so much benevolence, stood up like a note of admiration, *improvisé*, for the occasion.

"That is very kind of you," I rejoined; "but I don't know whether you are aware that I am again going abroad; so that I have begged of Mrs. Dunbar, and Edith, to make Brierly their home, which they have kindly consented to do."

"Ah, clearly so!" said the archdeacon; "and that is all

very well, as far as a *pied à terre* in Scotland is concerned : you see Edith is an uncommonly pretty, comely, and, indeed, I may say, striking person, therefore, I really do think, with proper advantages, such, for instance, as I could give her, she might marry uncommonly well, even among the *crème de la crème*, the *fine fleur* of the English aristocracy. ‘*Pon honor*,’ as my best friend, his Majesty, George the Fourth, used to say ; I think, she’s just the material for making a charming young duchess ; and when it comes to pass, I shall be quite proud of having originated the idea ;” and again the gold snuff-box was tapped (a present from his late Majesty George the Fourth, during his memorable visit to Edinburgh), and again, a pinch of snuff perorated the sentence. While I replied, more in answer to my own train of thought, than to what he had been saying—

“She might do worse, certainly,” which the reverend gentleman mistaking for an intended epigram, enunciated a most ladylike little “ha, ha, ha !” and gently patting his left hand with his right, he exclaimed, with a protecting smile—

“*Pas mal !*” for he was fond of tessellating his discourse with little scraps of foreign languages, as it proved to the vulgar two things : first, that he had travelled ; and next, that his faith was orthodox touching the gift of tongues.

In order to change the subject, which, with my peculiar fears respecting Edith, was anything to me but a pleasant one, I said—

“Oh ! by the bye, there is one thing I am glad to have an opportunity of speaking to you about ; do you not think that as it was poor Donald’s intention to have presented those costly old carvings to his parish church, that it behoves his relations—his friends, scrupulously to carry out his intention ; and that there will be something sacrilegious (under the circumstances) in letting that altar table, and those chairs, come to the hammer ; and rather than they should do so, ought we not to buy them in at any cost ; and see that they are consecrated to the purpose for which he had piously designed them ?”

"Oh! my dear sir," exclaimed the Archdeacon, with a little air of outraged propriety, first stroking the black silk-stockinged shin of his right leg, as it was crossed over the other, and then turning up the palms of his hands in deprecation, "*I* never interfere with any one's legal rights; the law *must* take its course; and it would be highly indecorous, not to say altogether unjustifiable, for me, or any member of the family of my late lamented young relative, much less of any *friend* (and he emphasised the word), to interfere either directly or indirectly with the just authority of the executors."

"And they said, I have ordered that *all* the personals should be sold without reserve, or without the slightest reference to the wishes or will of their last owner."

"Whew! wishes, my dear sir, are part of the empty air that turned Don Quixote's windmills—and as to will, a minor has no will, at least no right to make a will—so, as the lawyers say, your action won't lie."

"A plain proof," I retorted, "that it is not a legal action, for they generally lie through, and out of everything."

Here the servants brought in tea; and by the time the Archdeacon had sent his commendations to the dairy-maid by Anderson, on the super-excellence of the cream, and next told the footman, who handed the eatables, to be *sure* and remember and tell the housekeeper that *he* disliked rolled bread and butter, so to take care it did not come up again, to my great relief I heard the distant sound of carriage wheels, and rightly concluded that they were those of the post-chaise that brought Dr. McAlpine.

"There is one great obstacle, I fear," said I, as soon as the servants had left the room, "to your plan of transforming Edith into a duchess."

"What may that be?"

"Her want of fortune—for peers now-a-days are quite as eager after money, if not more so, than paupers; and were Venus herself to run at Newmarket against the Golden Calf, I do

not think, in our anti-romantic, and, therefore, sensible (?) and utilitarian age, from one end of the kingdom to the other, a boy of sixteen could be found sufficiently green to hazard even a sixpenny bet upon the former; so you see, my dear sir, you are imposing a fearful tax upon yourself in taking charge of a portionless beauty."

"I tell you what, Murray," said the reverend gentleman, closing his right eye in so undignified a manner, that a casual observer might have almost mistaken it for a wink, "husbands are like what I have heard girls say of the *valse à deux temps* step, 'if they are not caught *at once* they are never caught;' and ducal coronets, of course, form no exception to this rule. And though, as you truly say, this is a sensible age, when even boys don't make fools of themselves for love, yet the wisest are not wise at all times, and the strongest have their moments of weakness—Samson himself was caught napping; and why not some duke, pray?"

"Very true," said I, "even though he should be armed to the *teeth* with the self-same weapon with which Samson slayed his thousands and tens of thousands."

"And I shall very soon see," resumed the Archdeacon, "whether Edith *takes* or not."

Appropriately enough—this leech-like standard that he had established for his cousin,—heralded the arrival of the Doctor, for the next minute a carriage stopped at the door.

"Excuse me" said I, rising, "but I think I hear Doctor McAlpine."

"By all means;—then you will not be back in time for family prayers?"

"I think not to-night."

"*Addios*, then, only let me have McAlpine's *Bulletin*."

"Certainly," I replied,—as I closed the door, and joined the Doctor in the hall.

Mina was already there, crying—and endeavouring to explain to him how ill Edith was in her broken English, which

was not by any means rendered more intelligible from the Scotch twang she had acquired in her studies; which she religiously believed to be a peculiar inflection, constituting one of the niceties of English pronunciation!

Doctor McAlpine was a man of feeling as well as eminently skilful, and successful in his profession; therefore, he was not the least surprised at Edith's illness.

"It is so far fortunate," said he, "that this strain upon the body will lessen that upon the mind, but nevertheless, we must manage to subdue the fever, and, above all, take care she is not subjected to any fresh shock when she begins to be convalescent."

He then accompanied me upstairs, where we found the poor sufferer still raving, and the fever much increased.

"Shall you find it necessary to bleed her?" asked I, anxiously, as he was counting her pulse.

"No, no," said he, shaking his head. "The fact is, my dear Sir (but tell it not in Gath! and still less in Perth! or I should lose all my practice: for it takes at least one century if not two to remove popular prejudices), I, whenever I can, practise homœopathically, but quite *sub rosa*; for the old ladies of both sexes (who would think me an ass if I did not do so); I still continue to administer horse medicines, but for Miss Panmuir, whose febrile symptoms are not alone owing to mental excitement but have been partly superinduced by atmospheric exposure, I shall mix about nine globules of aconitum, or in plain English aconite, in six dessert spoonfuls of water, and the same quantities of brionium, or briony, which will be given to her alternately, a sixth part, that is one dessert spoonful every hour till the fever abates, when the aconite may be discontinued and the briony given alone; and I have no doubt I shall have the pleasure of finding her much better in the morning."

The first portion of this remedy he administered himself; and after giving some further directions and remaining with her about an hour, he retired to the room which had been got

ready for him; while I and Eös remained by Edith's bedside till about five in the morning, when, thank heaven! the fever was much abated; and she fell into a gentle doze; when leaving her to the care of Mina, and Norris the housekeeper, till Doctor McAlpine could get back to Perth, and send a nurse, I returned to my temporary quarters at "The Panmuir Arms," where good Mrs. Verner was not a little troubled at hearing of the additional sorrow which had befallen the inmates of the Moated House.

The Jew and the Gentile.

SECTION III.

"LE PREMIER PAS."

"A great fight of afflictions."—Heb. x. 32.

SEVERAL days had elapsed before the fever had quite left Edith, and during those days, I sadly neglected my new friend Jacob Jacobs, but I wrote and explained to him the reason; meanwhile he was now able to sit in the open air, and even to walk round the garden; and the sale at Glenfern had been put off for another ten days on account of Edith's illness, which delay the Archdeacon declared was a sad inconvenience to him, but to the true philosopher, there is a sort of indemnification to be extracted from even the most cross-grained, and untoward circumstances; but after all, philosophy is but a pagan panacea for the ills of life, and therefore, ten to one but so ticklish a theologian as the venerable the Archdeacon Panmuir would have eschewed it as such. But truly says Pythagoras in his golden verses—

"Power is seldom far from necessity."

So that what philosophy might never have been called upon to do, *Vieux Pomard* and *Château Margaux* were at hand to achieve, and so the reverend gentleman remained at Glenfern with the patience of Job, without however suffering from any

of his afflictions. Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, and his friend, Mr. Cecil Trevylian, appeared to have even more time than money at their command, and they seemed resolved to waste the latter at Glenfern, for there they still remained, and were unremitting in sending to inquire twice a day after Edith. Mr. Cecil Trevylian was the handsomest man of Trinity, and for a beauty, *par metier*, was as mild and innocuous as it was possible for anything so elaborately and extensively got up to be. His was rather a peculiar style, wearing his hair, which was dark and lustrous as a raven's wing, parted down the centre, in what Josephus terms, "after the fashion of the Nazarines," which, with his pale, clear complexion, and his small, peculiarly well-finished features, and turned-down gills, that displayed to advantage his exceedingly white throat, gave him a conflicting air, between a persecuted primitive Christian, and a disconsolate modern dandy; yet nevertheless, if ever content had become incarnate, it was in the person of Cecil Trevylian, for he literally appeared to desire, or to think of nothing beyond those attractions which centred in himself, and this naturally brought him to Plutarch's happy standard of—

"Qui pauca requirunt, non multis excidunt."

Yet, though in reality such a frame of mind is the *ne plus ultra* of human wisdom; his *friend* Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, who all in affecting to ridicule, envied him his good looks, was in the habit of speaking of him, as "that d—d ass, Trevylian;" not that the former was by any means dissatisfied with his *own* personal appearance, which was gentlemanlike, though decidedly ugly, nor would he have been so, had he been ten times plainer. Wilkes, among his other liberties, took that of asserting; that in order to succeed with any (?) woman he only required a fortnight's start of the handsomest man in the kingdom, now Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars would not have deigned to ask, nor to accept, even this much odds, as he had a theory that intel-

lect was a fiery and indomitable Bucephalus, that in *any race*, or on *any course*, could distance all competitors, and this said intellect being his *Cheval de Bataille*, he rode it on all occasions, sometimes à la *Mazeppa*, without bit or bridle, where his own lawless and ungovernable passions were concerned; at others, where worldly ambition was the goal, with whip, spur and martingale, and again for the nominally minor, but in reality paramount *succès de société* (for they are the secret springs that move our social machine), he had all the *pas de manège*, *caracoles*, graceful curvettings, and *tours de force* of "THE GREAT HORSE;" no wonder then, that he was nothing daunted by his whiskers being even more *genuinely* deep red than himself, and his face being of the Cassius type, "lean and hungry"-looking—with a strong family likeness to both a vulture and a goat; the former being the outward and visible sign of his moral, and the latter of his physical nature. The teeth were fine, but of the carnivorous strength and whiteness of those belonging to a wolf or a tiger, and the expression of the heavy and animal mouth, especially when his pale light eyes took the initiative in speaking to women, if they happened to be young or handsome, had so much of the satyr in it as to be truly appalling!

Not a very seductive portrait this, some will think. But they are wrong, and Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was right; for intellect is a sort of Venus's Cestus, that can make ugliness itself more attractive with it, than beauty without it. A serpent is anything but captivating in its appearance, and yet it was under that form that the devil did all the mischief. Besides, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars *had* a good figure, and a small foot, in which all the vanity he could spare from his head was centred, and, as Trevylian used to say, it was upon the strength of these that Ferrars hoped to make a figure in the world, and to get a footing in society. I repeat this, not on account of the puns with which it was polluted, but because it is worthy of record from the sayer of it having been reckoned the most silent man at

Cambridge, owing to the circumstance of his never speaking unless he had something to say ; and as he never had anything to say (with the exception of the foregoing memorable instance), consequently he never spoke. What a quiet world this would be, if every one similarly situated were to adopt the same commendable plan ! But to return to the Moated House. Nothing could equal the desolate appearance of the rooms ; for all things that were not sealed, had printed labels pasted on them, with the number of the lot, ready for the auction ; which was now within two days of taking place.

The handwriting on the wall could scarcely have appalled Belshazzar more than these evidences, that *all* would soon be demanded of this bereft family did Mrs. Dunbar.

"That it should come to this !" the poor old lady would every moment exclaim, with uplifted hands and streaming eyes.

It was in answer to one of these ejaculations, a day or two before the sale, that laying my hand upon hers, and pressing it gently, I said,—

"What hast thou, that thou didst not receive?"

"I know it well, Murray ; and yet it is hard to part with these mute friends of one's whole life. What have *they* done, that they should be banished and sent adrift upon the world, even if we are ?"

"I can quite enter into your feelings, my dear Madam : there is something terrible—nay, almost sacrilegious—in selling one's household gods ; and it seems as if the Furies usurped their vacant places to lash us from the home we had desecrated, but you must think of all we have still to be thankful for—of Edith's being so much better, and—

"I do think of it, Murray," interrupted Mrs. Dunbar, crying still more bitterly ; "and I almost think it would have been better if she and poor Donald had gone together, for in their "father's house there are many mansions ;" but in this world she is likely soon not to have a roof over her

head, for, only fancy—as if our cup of affliction was not already full enough!—this morning the executors forwarded a letter to Kirkby, the auctioneer, from that Sir Piers Moncton, to whom the house and lands of Glenfern were to go as heir-at-law, and who (though they say he is a distant relation of the family's, I'm very sure cannot have a drop of Panmuir blood in his veins)—well, he has written to say, that as he lives entirely abroad, he wishes the house and estate to be put up to auction at the same time as the personals, Glenfern being the only part of his property which is unentailed."

This was indeed a blow to me as well as to the poor old lady, and I knew would be an additional one to Edith; for it was some slight consolation, though a poor one, to think that the old place would not pass entirely out of the family, but go to at least a distant branch of it; but endeavouring to conceal my own chagrin as well as I could, I had recourse to one of those common-place truisms which nonplussed sympathy so often resorts to, in default of any more solid grounds of consolation.

"That is indeed vexatious," replied I; "but, after all, my dear Mrs. Dunbar, we must recollect that it is more a theoretical vexation than a practical one, for Glenfern would have been equally lost to you and Edith whether it went, in the course of law, to this Sir Piers Moncton, whom you neither of you know, and never even saw, or whether it goes by chance into the possession of any other stranger."

"Oh! but it is the whole thing, Murray—it is the whole thing!—it's *all* so bitter, all so hard, to think that even poor Mary's picture, with that of poor dear Donald and Edith hanging about her, done by Chalon, when they were only four and six years old, and Eös' picture, by Landseer, taking care of what the dear good faithful fellow will never have to take care of again—poor Donald's hat, whip, and gloves—to think, I say, that even those are to be sold to the first chance purchaser, like so much waste paper!—Alciphron Murray, I tell you it's *too*

much sorrow to be heaped on a poor weak old heart and a tender young one, all at the same time! And then those beautiful carvings, too, which that poor boy meant for Glenfern church;—oh! it's rank sacrilege *that* is, and nothing less!"

"My dear Mrs. Dunbar!" said I, approaching my chair to hers, and taking both her hands in mine, "things are not quite so bad as you think. The pictures of——, the children, and of Eös, I have secured from profanation by ordering Kirkby to buy them in at any price—so *they* are still Edith's; with regard to the carvings, I am sorry to say I was not equally successful, for nothing would induce the Archdeacon to consent to having what he calls the prerogatives of the executors interfered with; so, he being poor Donald's nearest o' kin, I could not act counter to his consent, and was therefore obliged to content myself with having obtained it about the pictures."

"Thank you Murray, thank you, for removing that much of the weight! and may God bless you for it."

"And now having blessed me, a poor humble instrument, senseless and powerless, with all my fellows, save when wielded and guided by the Master-hand of the GREAT ARTIFICEER, let us both bless God, whom, remember (and indeed you are not wont to forget it), is ever behind *even the darkest clouds*, with which He in his wisdom sees fit to intercept our temporal sunshine. I hate being the hero of my own stories, but yesterday morning, I was one of the actors in a little scene, out of which La Fontaine would have made a charming fable. I am not La Fontaine, so instead of melodious verse turned by the lathe of the Graces, you must accept plain and very prosaic prose; but the moral is pointed by a higher power, and it is for the sake of the *latter*, dear Mrs. Dunbar, that I trouble you with my fable (which is yet no fable, as it really happened). I call it

THE BLACKBIRD AND THE BONZE.

"The latter title, you must know, I have arrogated to myself, from having spent a whole day nearly in cementing the

bonds of union between the most mutilated and dissevered of Amy Verner's Nankin cups and plates, and green dragon impossibilities, therefore, I think I am fairly entitled to be called a Priest of China ? ”

The old lady smiled, it was the first smile that had gleamed across the wintry desolation of her face since her grandson's death ; I was thankful for it, and continued my fable.

“ Once upon a time, a certain Bonze or Priest of China was taking his morning's repast in a rustic retreat, overhanging a murmuring river (you know Amy Verner's little back parlour, with its trellis paper of roses and jessamine, looking out upon the garden at the end of which brawls the little brook of the Muir, those are the facts, but for literary dignity (?) I thought '*rustic retreat*' and '*overhanging a murmuring river* ! ' sounded grander and better, (another smile from the old lady, which acted like a sugar plum to a child at its lesson, so fluently did it enable me to continue) and into the sympathising bosom of these waters, the earliest willows wept, and on their limpid surface floated pure white water lilies, like to the coronal of a bride,—except that few brides, even royal ones, have wreaths so gemmed and pearly ! An Eastern queen of very brown complexion, and not too fair a fame, dissolved, so at least schoolboys are told, a pearl, or *union* in a cup. (Unions alas ! are not so easily dissolved now-a-days;) but here were whole cups of pearl, and each calix was brimmed up with diamond dew-drops ; a pretty sight truly, even as a Bonze could desire to see, and they in all countries are known to be fastidious, piously seeking the *best* in every thing. Besides the river and its lilled crown, there was also a pretty garden, rich in blossoms, and in boughs, and a fair velvet green-sward, where Flora and Pomona might have run races, and when trying to get out of the way of their importunate pursuers Zephyrus and Apollo, might even have fallen fifty times without being hurt once. What considerably added to the beauty of this garden was that it was just then the time of roses ; so that nature seemed

one universal blush, as if fluttering with pleasure, at all the sweet things the south wind was whispering to her. In short such a mosaic of varied life was there in that little garden, that the Bonze, as he looked out on it, could not help comparing it to an epitome of the world; the latter thought was more especially suggested by a buzzing, bustling, burly bee at that moment booming past him with as little ceremony as if the insect had been a Bonze, and the Bonze only an insect! 'Ah! there you go!' cried the latter, just like a popular author, ransacking, rummaging and turning over the leaves of every flower; cribbing a tint here, and a perfume there, then diving a little deeper, into the calix which the superficial breeze has neglected to do, and extracting some hoarded and unsuspected treasure, and so on to another and another till the cram is completed, when after due amalgamation—lo! the concrete effluence issues from some fashionable hive; and the startling audacity! is instantly devoured by drones with commensurate edacity. While the Wasps, or Critics, (for being a critic does not inculpate the necessity of being a conjurer!) declare the last work of the great Bumble Bee, to be genuine Hybla, and quite worthy of his genius, which some far distant editor of future 'Notes and Queries' may question if they did not mean to write *genus*? But this notion suggested by the Brigand Bee, was but a passing thought; so the Bonze continued to eat, and look out, and again, as Bonzes alone can do;—under difficulties, and the greatest of all difficulties too, at meals, that of not being hungry; therefore as a *mezzo termine*, he returned to philosophising, which is as good an amusement as any other, when people have *literally* nothing else to do; as it may be termed Idleness playing at thinking. Well this game had lasted some time, though as the Bonze had only been playing for love, of course, he gained nothing; when presently he saw a portly-looking blackbird alight upon a rose-bush, and after chirping to it for some time he fluttered through it, and finally settling upon one of the upper branches, shook it in the most uncere-

monious manner,—till all the leaves began to fall, and that part of the lawn just under the rose-tree, became in truth

“Showers of shadowing roses.”

Was this a mere fit of ornithological spleen? or could it be that the bird meant it for a cunning compliment to his mate, that in case he stayed out later than usual amusing himself, he might go home and tell Mrs. B. that he had mistaken a rose for her? Or did the fact lie the other way, and owing some grudge to the rose-bush, did he pretend to mistake *it* for his wife; that he might thus laudably and legitimately vent his ill-humour upon it? On this point let metaphysicians decide, and over it let them squabble and debate as only metaphysicians CAN! ‘Posing the syllogism thus,’ as the great Bumble Bee would say, there we leave it; and return to the Bonze, who now began to watch narrowly the proceedings of the bird; who, as soon as the flowers were freed from the leaves, commenced eagerly pecking at the petals.

“Ho, ho! is it so?” said the Bonze; ‘*as usual*, the solution of the enigma is a near and superficial cause, while I have been missing it, by searching far and deep where it was not to be found; but since, my poor fellow, it was merely hunger, and neither malice matrimonial nor prepense, which caused your rough usage of the rose-tree, I will take care you are not again tempted to play the destroying angel, at least for some time.’

“And so saying, the Bonze hung through the window, at a little distance from, but within sight of the bird, a large piece of bread, a lump of sugar, and a bunch of grapes; but the poor blackbird was so frightened at the missiles, as they hurled past him, which he, in his poor ignorant bird’s heart, thought *could* portend nothing less than the ‘crack of doom,’ at least to all birds, so that he flew hastily away, without even looking at the harvest before him—his fears struggling and fluttering within his poor little body far more than his wings did without—as he flew straight home, without any further thoughts of pleasure,

at least for that day, to tell them all, with the graphic energy and eloquence of an eye and ear witness, of the terrible *airquake* which had overtaken him as he was catering for their wants; and now they must make up their minds to die of starvation, which was staring them all in the face.

"On the other hand, the Bonze was not a little distressed and disappointed at the untoward result of his benevolent intentions; but he consoled himself with the reflection, that the provisions would remain, or could be renewed, and that the poor bird's panic would pass away like a dream; as all other things, whether for good or for evil, *do* pass in this ever-fleeting and never-pausing world of ours. Accordingly, that same evening, a little before sunset, when all was calm and still, so that the very leaves seemed to sleep, he had the pleasure of seeing the poor blackbird come forth; but this time he neither flew nor chirruped, but walked slowly and timorously, as if duty was reigning in fear, till he came beneath the rose-bush, and beheld the unexpected treasure that awaited him; and then he set up such a chirping and fluttering of wings as never was heard before or since throughout all the realms of Blackbirdia and Thrushland: and first he flew off with the grapes; then he returned for the bread; and finally for the sugar; which the Bonze took care should be renewed each day. So that, no doubt, now, among his family circle, when alluding to the wonderful manner he has got on in the world, he always dates his rise from that terrible *airquake*! which, at the time, he thought had come to overwhelm him and his, with destruction.

"And depend upon it, my dear Mrs. Dunbar," concluded I, with a smile, "*we* know quite as little of the *wherefore*, *freighting*, and *ultimate result* of every blow that, for the time, prostrates and appals us, as the poor blackbird did; but as *we do* know that it is an all-wise and merciful Providence who directs every blow under which we smart, let us, at least, have sufficient faith to believe that they are not less fraught with present benevolence, and our ultimate and preordained good, than was the

one under which the poor blackbird so fearfully but foolishly cowered. And who knows but, terrible and trying as all this now is, it may be but the beginning and working out of some great and signal future good to Edith ? ”

“ Well, Murray, God in heaven grant it may be so ; and if it should, I shall think of your blackbird : but, at all events, as you truly say, all is God’s will ; and as such we *ought* to endeavour to bear it.”

“ And, depend upon it, to endeavour *steadfastly*, is to succeed ; and, in *bearing*, it is *not* figurative to assert, that we actually *do* lighten our burden ; for patience is the greatest of all emollients. We all pray to be enabled to *do* God’s will ; but there is another boon, quite as essential for us to ask, which is, to *endure* His will ; for our trials are not always of an active nature, demanding exertion and diligence from us ; they are often, very often, of a passive, heavy, and stagnant kind ; and these are always the most oppressive, not only because they appear to have taken root too strongly to be moved, but because action, either of body or mind, is in itself relief, as it is a sort of pioneering away, however ineffectually, the obstacles by which we are surrounded. But when the blow is overpowering, and God’s hand is so heavy upon us that we *cannot move*, nor could we achieve anything if we did, then is it that we must pray to *endure* ; and when we learn to do so, we shall indeed find ‘ our strength is in sitting still ; ’ we shall turn away our wrath from those poor tools—*secondary causes*—which, as long as we contend with them, are sure to prove a blistering ointment to all our trials, and we shall look alone to the ‘ *great first cause least understood*. ’ Reason is an imperious Ajax dashed against the rock of its own arrogance, and consumed by the thunder which it has impiously attempted to defy ; but faith is an humble flower which meekly bows its fragile stem to let the storm pass over it ; and when it *has* passed, rises again, pure and uninjured. Look to this ‘ *great first cause*, ’ my dear Mrs. Dunbar, and then you will cease to arraign this Sir Piers

Moncton, Robert Vallory, and George Gilbert, the executors, or any other ephemeri; but will know and feel that it is God's WILL that Glenfern should pass away from the Panmuirs, or, otherwise, it could *not* do so. And now," added I, removing Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' sealed packet from the little table where it had so long lain unopened, "I'll go and see Edith, as you say she is sitting up in her dressing-room, and will see me."

"And I will go with you," said Mrs. Dunbar; so giving her my arm, we left the room together. We found Edith half sitting, half reclining upon a *chaise longue*. As Dr. McAlpine had foreseen, the exhaustion of the body had relieved, or at least subdued the mental struggle; for she was outwardly calm; a little table with books and a few hot-house flowers stood beside her; a book was also open in her hand, upon which her eyes were fixed, and yet she was evidently not reading; and Eös sat beside her with his head in her lap, and his large, brown, honest, melancholy eyes intently fixed upon her face. As we entered, she raised herself up to kiss her grandmother, and then extended her hand to me. By tacit consent we avoided all allusion to the *one* thought uppermost in each of our hearts, and talked of the weather! What *would* English, Irish, and Scotch people do without that dreary yet versatile and never-flagging subject—that national safety-valve, alike for all dulness and all dilemmas? This delightful fluctuation of barometrical conversation had not lasted above ten minutes, when Mina entered, bearing a small basket filled with moss and peregrine falcon's eggs; and Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' compliments to Mrs. Dunbar, and Miss Panmuir, and he had himself been to the top of the Eagle's Cliff and Cedar Idris for them."

"*Himself!*" echoed Mrs. Dunbar, looking at me; "do you believe that?—when Clooney McBean and Anty Norse, the best climbers and falcon hunters in the country, are afraid to venture among the crags, either of Cedar Idris, or the Eagle's Cliff?"

To this appeal I made no other reply, than by taking up a little dropsical-looking edition of Johnson's Dictionary, and reading aloud—

"Falcon, a small hawk trained for sport;" and then added, nonchalantly—

"By-the-bye, Edith, here is a packet that has been lying below for you for some time; I don't know whether it comes from the same perilous height as those eggs; but, I believe, it is from the same person."

"Have the goodness to open it," said she, pushing it languidly back into my hand. I obeyed by breaking the seals—within was a small volume of Terntyson's *Early Poems*, with "Donald Panmuir, Trinity Coll., Cambridge," written in the fly-leaf; but, beside, was an almost duodecimo volume of note paper, closely written, intended, doubtless, for a note; but, much more like an essay.

"What is it?" asked Edith.

"I really don't know what it is," replied I, replacing the packet in her hand.

She had no sooner glanced at her brother's well-known hand-writing, in the title-page, than a violent fit of hysteresis was the result. I let these natural tears take their course for some time, and then said—

"You had better read this note;"—novel, I felt would be a more appropriate term for such a volume.

"No, no," sobbed Edith; "I cannot; do you read it."

"But it may not be intended for any eye but yours," rejoined I, hesitatingly.

"Murray!" said she, looking at me reproachfully, while a slight tinge of indignation suffused her cheek. These symptoms appeared to augur a proper frame of mind wherewith to meet any advances from the enemy; for such, as far as Edith was concerned, I could not but look upon this cold, calculating, subtle, highly intellectual, and as highly immoral, and totally heartless man to be. His voluminous effusion began by stating, that the accompanying little book had been the last poor Donald had looked into, as it had been found on his pillow on the fatal morning of the boat race,—here ensued a sort of elo-

quent funeral oration on his virtues, artfully interwoven with touching little reminiscences; the whole drift of which was to hint, without the clumsy egotism of actual assertion, the high estimation in which the deceased held the writer of those lines, and the devoted friendship that had subsisted between them; the friendship, indeed, death had interrupted; the devotion must ever as a right, belong to *all* who could claim the slightest affinity to his dear and ever-lamented friend!—here was a subtle touch of mastercraft; the *devotion*, which might be considered premature, and therefore impertinently energetic, if offered to *one*, was skilfully diluted by being pledged to *ALL*! Surely there was nothing *personal*, offensive, or even *COVERT* in this? Nevertheless, the style without becoming less polished, less stilted, or less studied, *did* become *less general*. The pronouns “you” and “I,” occurred more frequently as the composition (for such it evidently was) advanced; till, imperceptibly—so imperceptibly that it seemed the most natural thing in the world—the “I” and the “you” gradually fused into “*our*!” it was “*Our grief!*” “*Our loss!*” Then came a charming simile about the ephemeral acquaintances, began in smiles, which might, and probably *did*, end as quickly as a passing ray of summer sunlight; while those originating in the commingling tears of two great griefs, became at once the source and the current of a deep and ceaseless friendship!

It must be confessed that Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars’ elaborate production owed nothing to my “good emphasis and discretion;” for it would be impossible for anything to be more slovenly than my enunciation of it, or the manner in which I mouthed the whole; not paying the slightest respect to even the most finely rounded periods; or those portions of it evidently intended by him to be the most touching; or, as he himself would most aptly have expressed it, the most “*telling*.” Nevertheless, save at those passages where Edith was dissolved in tears at some direct mention of, or allusion to poor Donald, she listened to it with involuntary interest, as the lights and shadows

on her transparent cheek too plainly testified, coupled with an occasional, almost imperceptible irritation, at my uncongenial reading. When I had finished, and doled out to the last letter of the writer's name, and had leisurely refolded the effusion, she said, with a sigh, as she took it off the table where I had first laid it—

“He writes well.”

“Too well,” was my laconic rejoinder.

“How, too well?”

“In this way, that if he felt more, he could not express so much.”

“What! then would *you* have been so cruel as to have withheld this precious book from me?” said Edith, pressing it to her heart, with a tone of championship that would have amply gratified even Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars’ vanity, could he have seen and heard it; and it would also have repaid him for the labour he had evidently bestowed upon his letter; for he was too great a magi in the black art of seduction, too deeply read in the *grimoire* of gallantry, not to know that to interest a woman’s imagination is the shortest road to her heart.”

“Decidedly not,” said I, in reply to her question; “but I would not have profaned the sanctity of *that* memorial by one added syllable of my own. The eloquence of rhetoric is fluency; but that of deep feeling, depend upon it, is silence.”

“And yet, I don’t know,” said Edith, musingly, “people feel, that is, they show feeling so differently.”

“In which the heart only resembles other commercial emporiums; for it is not always those that make the greatest external display which possess the largest stock within.”

“But he’s *very* clever indeed, is he not?—that Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars?” put in Mrs. Dunbar.

“Oh, very.” And in order to finish the sentence, and express my own thoughts more tersely, I took up Mr. Rendell’s volume on Antediluvian History, which I had given Edith, and turning to page 184, read aloud the following most true pas-

sage, which I should like to see inscribed in golden letters over all the doors of our colleges, and on those of every public and private school:—

“How often are clever men discovered to be crafty? Does it not sometimes happen, that men with enlarged understandings have narrow souls and selfish hearts? Is it not a fact, that wise men are sometimes wicked?—that they perpetrate their ills with sagacity—‘plate their sins with gold?’ Every one knows these truths; but why are they so? Simply because they have eaten of the tree of knowledge; they have devoured information with a great appetite; regarding knowledge as the end; desiring to be clever, rather than to be good. The mischievous tendency of such a course is evident. It places the perpetrator in the position of ‘that servant who knew his Lord’s will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will (and who, therefore, shall be beaten with many stripes).’ How wise, then, is the command: ‘Ye shall not eat of it;’ and if men do so, how certain their fall—a fall into a criminal neglect of the laws of order, propriety, integrity, and virtue.

“Does not experience prove that this is just the course which the sensual appetites of men suggest? It desires to separate itself from superior guidance, and to be left to its own control. It strives to prevent knowledge from exercising its salutary influence upon the lower affections. It would persuade us that its only province is the head—that men are wise in many things, because they may happen to know something of a few, and so leave the heart untouched to mistake its way.”

“Now, this,” added I, “is as true as the Gospel which it elucidates; for it is this gorgeous illumination of the intellectual portion of man’s nature, while the more important moral part is left in total darkness, for every vice to stumble through—that is the real curse of our age. Tell to any one the most atrocious traits of character, or blackest deeds of a person who has *succeeded* in the world, and the reply is nearly invariably—

“‘Oh! but they are very clever!’”

"Which is as though, in animadverting upon the personal ugliness of a man, you should be reproved, and answered by the assertion—

"'Yes; but, then, he is such an exemplary character, and such an exalted Christian!' In short, cleverness, now-a-days (that is, intellectual pre-eminence), seems to be considered as a sort of mundane ATONEMENT which redeems men from every sin, and blots out every crime! Whereas, spiritually speaking, it in reality aggravates each, and renders both unpardonable; for, though ignorance may, like charity, 'cover a multitude of sins,' verily, those '*who* know the right, and yet the wrong pursue,' can have no claim on, and, therefore, no hope of mercy."

"But, surely," said Edith, "you do not think that goodness and cleverness are incompatible?"

"Far from it; on the contrary, I maintain that the highest order of intellect is always based upon goodness; for it has been well said, that 'a man may be great by chance, but never good by chance.' It might be very clever, for instance, to begin building one's house downward, from the upper story, and would doubtless arrest the attention, and excite the admiration, of the wayfarers; but, at the same time, it would be wofully insecure and unstable for all who ventured their persons, or their property, in an edifice thus constructed, and begun at the wrong end. And even as vanity renders beauty less attractive, by making it ridiculous, so vice, in my opinion, renders genius itself contemptible."

"There is no one, Murray, whose opinion I would sooner defer to, than yours," rejoined Edith; "and yet, it seems to me that you are unusually severe, and, therefore, perhaps, a little unjust to this Mr. Ponsonby Ferrara."

I instantly perceived the impolicy of such an error, as my object was to guard her against him, and by such a course, I could only convert her woman's nature into a partisan; so I hastened to reply that I had been speaking generally, and not

of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars in particular. But, unfortunately, thanks to my own *gaucherie*, the spark had fallen upon the train I had been trying to quench, as Edith was now evidently thinking of this man and his letter; for she looked almost timidly up in my face, as she said—

“But there must be good in him, or Donald would not have been his friend; and there is no doubt of his being clever, as he carried off all the honours at Cambridge.”

“Merit,” said I, stupidly (for I was again committing the very same blunder, with which I had so recently reproached myself), “consists not so much in attaining honours, as in deserving them.”

“Well, but,” said she, with a relaxation of the mouth, that almost amounted to a smile, “*that sort of honours* must, at least, be deserved by the talent which obtains them.”

“Who knows?” retorted I, as I rose to wish her and Mrs. Dunbar good-bye; for I found that my fears of this man were outstripping my discretion, and so I thought I had better leave them to digest the hints I had already dropped. “Who knows, perhaps there may be a royal road to climbing the tree of knowledge, as there is to ascending Cedar Idris, and the Eagle’s Cliff—a ladder made of other men’s backs and brains, perchance. But you are looking so much better, Edith, that I hope in a day or two you will be able to take a turn round the lawn with me.”

“Oh yes! to-morrow,” said she, putting her handkerchief to her eyes, “I shall be able to go to Amy Verner’s, if you will drive me and grandmamma there.”

I merely nodded a silent assent as I left the room, for I could not have uttered it in words, as, the next day but one, the sale of, and at, Glenfern was to take place; and it had been agreed, in order to be out of the way of it, that Edith and Mrs. Dunbar should go to the little inn, till the former was sufficiently recovered to remove to London, whither the Arch-deacon, full of his matrimonial schemes, had insisted upon their ultimately going.

The Jew and the Gentile.

SECTION IV.

THE SALE.

"I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other."—*Luke xiii. 9.*

"Honour the Lord with thy substance."—*Prov. iii. 9.*

ARCHDEACON Panmuir, who had breakfasted an hour earlier than usual, on Thursday, the 24th of August, 18—, the morning of the sale at Glenfern, was the first in the auction-room, decorously adorned in the blackest of sables, agreeably relieved by the whitest possible of handkerchiefs. The latter, however, was not called into requisition till the advent of Kirkby the auctioneer; for upon my arrival the reverend gentleman shook hands with me in as quiet and unconcerned a manner as if it had merely been a hunting morning, and he was waiting for the rest of the meet; but when the appraiser entered, things naturally assumed a more business-like appearance, the snowy kerchief was passed across his eyes, and Samuel Panmuir said in a voice wherein solemnity (at a moment's notice, as the play-bills have it) kindly took the part of sorrow—

"A sad business this, Mr. Kirkby."

"Very sad, indeed sir; don't think that in the whole course of my *pro-fession** I ever officiated under more painful circumstances."

* Every occupation now-a-days, from shooting one's fellow-creatures at so much *per diem*, in a scarlet coat, to sweeping a street in a ragged one, is by the *employé*, called "a profession." Amen.

And so saying, Mr. Kirkby turned to the sideboard (for it was in the dining-room that the sale was to commence), and slightly tapping with his *pro*-fessional hammer, to have certain sample bottles of wine more compactly placed by the servant who was arranging them, so as not to occupy so much space, next proceeded with his own orange-coloured silk pocket-handkerchief to flip the dust off of the splendidly-carved altar table and chairs, which were to be the first lot put up, and upon which the Archdeacon steadily kept his eyes, till his attention was diverted by the influx of vehicles and conveyances of every description, from the family coach down to the rattling post-chaises and shooting ponies, which now began to crowd the lawn, and throng the avenues and every other approach to the house. Foremost in the van was a yellow post-chaise, with red wheels and a blue post-boy, which now swang round the sweep of the lawn, rattled past the windows, and stopped at the hall door, and from which alighted the two executors, Messieurs Vallory and Gilbert—highly respectable men, both of them, in the English acceptance of the word, for they were eminently wealthy, being partners in the great Liverpool firm of Vallory, Gilbert, and Vallory; but Gilbert was by far the most *respectable* of the two, being a shrewd, *hard* man—hard as his own cash; who had never lost, lent, or *foolishly* spent a shilling in the whole course of his life. Not so Robert Vallory; had not the capital been originally his, he never would have been the senior partner of such a firm; for it was supposed that he had *given* more thousands in helping his fellow-creatures than he had ever risked in commercial speculations. Nevertheless, strange as it might appear to some, and to none more so than to George Gilbert, it would seem that he had invested these lavished thousands to good purpose, for he prospered even in worldly matters; and his son, who was but a sleeping partner in the house, was an M. P. among the few fitted to be such. For in a country like England, where PROPERTY is the *only* thing legislated for, or that finds protection from our statutes, civil or penal, it is fitting that

it should be represented by capitalists ; and indeed there is also another reason, namely, that the high-toned virtues which chivalry originated, and the practice of which our forefathers considered as the only charter by which they could claim and retain the title of GENTLEMAN are now chiefly monopolized by the merchant-princes of England.

Towards Edith's father, at the outset of his life, Robert Vallory had exercised one of those munificent humanities, of a pecuniary nature, upon which men bestow that portion of admiration which consists in wonder ; and then set it aside, like the other limited acknowledged wonders of the world, to be occasionally talked of, but never imitated ; doubtless, for fear it should cease to be a wonder ; though the monetary part of the obligation had long been repaid, the transaction had rendered Muir Panmuir and Robert Vallory firm friends for life ; for it is only in bad, barren natures, that the golden seed of generosity, produces the rank, poisonous weed of ingratitude.

We generally find that men's moral nature has an antitype in their physical, or exterior appearance, even where beauty intervenes, to dazzle and mystify the judgment. Still, evil passions cast their dark shadows athwart its brightness, in the *silhouette* of a bad expression. Nothing could be more strongly exemplified than this rule was in the two partners ; in Vallory there was, as it were, a shining out of the whole man ; in the large, clear blue-eye, honesty and kindness beamed co-equally on the high open forehead ; worldliness had traced no crooked indentures,—time had found and left it fair ; and the white locks above it were so silvery bright, that they looked as if the recording angel, in his haste to return to heaven to register Robert's good deeds, had merely dropped a few feathers from his wings, as an earnest of their future meeting. On his cheeks the glow of health still lingered, though tempered with life's autumnal ray ; the teeth, were also remarkably white ; and there was a mixture of benevolence and precision about the mouth, which truly typified the equal balance of his character. His

dress and appearance were those of an aristocratic country gentleman, both being clean and neat to a peculiarity; and without being fat, there was something large and portly in his whole person. His hands were exceedingly beautiful, and thoroughbred, and quite *looked* their vocation, that of GIVING fully and amply; for we maintain it, there is quite as much physiognomy in a hand, as there is in a face;—look at some hands; and you will see, that they can only scrape and take, but *cannot give*.

George Gilbert, on the contrary, had remarkably small, sunken, unquiet, grey eyes; which, however they might take in the light of others, emitted none of their own; the forehead was high to a deformity, and appeared still more so, from his being bald; his hair, which had been originally red, was now extremely thin, and from being nearly grey, looked exactly like a well-amalgamated mixture of rhubarb and magnesia. His features were handsome, though somewhat too sharp, and disfigured by a scorbutic eruption, for his blood was as poor as his spirit. It was curious to see anything so thin, with sufficient of the vital principle in it for locomotion; and as he moved to and fro, he gave one the idea of having sent his flesh and blood to be replenished, and walking in his bones, till they came back. His costume consisted of a sort of muddy evaporated-looking pair of pepper-and-salt trousers, with varnished tipped boots of the same colour; he wore a white hat, with a black crape band round it; and an uncomfortable-looking, lanky, black mackintosh; which altogether gave him the appearance of having been a failure under the well-intentioned frictions of the Humane Society. His gloves were also of a grey motley colour, and of some webby elastic texture, which seemed to be endowed with equal powers of resistance, against shrinking and stretching. In his hand he carried a small, thin, yellow cane, with an indigenuous crook at the top of it, which he kept continually knocking against his under teeth, as if to test their soundness; or perhaps it might have been, to let no unguarded word escape his lips in spite of them.

All the neighbours now, for twenty miles round, began to pour in ; and, to their credit be it spoken, *all*, without a single exception, had come with the benevolent intention of purchasing, according to their means, some one of the Lares and Penates of the young orphan and the aged widow, in order to restore it to them ; so that they might, at least, have some old familiar objects about them to give their exile, wherever it might be, a little look of HOME !

And presently a spruce tilbury, with a thoroughbred, fine-headed, curved-necked, high-stepping horse, groomed to perfection, its satiny coat only distinguishable from its plain brown leather harness by its superior lustre, swept past the windows ; and Tim, who was in waiting at the hall-door, took the reins and jumped in as soon as his master and Mr. Cecil Trevelyian had alighted from it. There was, in the superiority of this *chef d'œuvre* of Adams's, among the other antiquated and lumbering vehicles, a sort of practical impertinence that the very shooting-ponies (though not made to draw—even inferences) must have been sensible of ; for even the plain brown harness, with no attempt at ornament, beyond the two small black crests in relief on the blinkers, were, but what they seemed, another of those numerous editions of

“The devil's darling sin—pride, that apes humility.”

The two cantabs were in deep mourning of the most unexceptionable cut and texture ; and yet, although Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' lachrymatory cambric, and that of the Archdeacon, seemed to keep up a sort of *little-go* emulation between them in the assiduous manner in which they were applied to their respective owner's eyes, poor Trevelyian had monopolized the little feeling that fluctuated between them—at least so I judged, from the circumstance of his never once looking in the glass to *see* whether the tears were in his eyes, though surrounded by mirrors of all sizes and dimensions, which had been indiscriminately

placed upon the different tables; and when a beauty—and more especially a MALE beauty—neglects to consult anything in the shape of a looking-glass of which even the smallest bird's-eye view is attainable, it may safely be concluded that the feeling which occasions this strange and very unwonted omission *must* be of a most genuine and engrossing nature. At all events, where a dandy is concerned, it is the only way in which one *can* "hold the mirror up to nature."

The crowd now became dense almost to suffocation; yet, like the *panache blanc* of *Henri Quatre*, were the white kerchiefs of the Archdeacon and Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars to be ever seen fluttering in the thickest of the *mêlée*; and I could not but think, that if they continued to do so, Mr. Kirby's *pro*-fessional skill would be as much puzzled by their supposed signals as our Third Richard's guilty fears were by the imaginary "two Richmonds" he saw in the field. Just as this thought came across me, I perceived Jacob Jacobs trying to make his way through the crowded doorway,—which, having his left arm still in a sling, and walking with a stick, was no very easy task; and I was about to step forward to offer him my assistance, when the Archdeacon with one hand caught my arm, while with the other he clutched, in the most undignified and unsentimental manner, the snowy handkerchief which usually he waved so lightly and gracefully as if merely mildly cautioning and ex-postulating with the flies to keep their distance.

"There, there!" cried he, convulsively—"there is that d—d Jew (Heaven forgive me!)—I *told* you so; I *knew* his illness was all a sham; and that he'd be here to defraud the widow and the orphan as much as possible."

"Let us hope not," said I, breaking from him, in order to make my way towards the vituperated Israelite, "more than we are *all* going to despoil them; for a sale of this sort is indeed a terrible spoliation."

Samuel Panmuir lifted up his hands, and shook them as if he had been anathematizing the whole of the ten tribes; nor

did he desist till his eyes fell upon Mr. Gilbert's lank macintosh, which seemed to act as a slimy sedative to his irritated nerves and polemical susceptibilities, and restore him in some degree to his normal state of pompous propriety.

I at length effected a passage towards Jacobs; and a very few minutes after we had exchanged greetings, Mr. Kirkby ascended his *pro*-fessional rostrum, where not content with draping the now vacant mantle of the immortal George Robins so gracefully and worthily around him, he appeared also to have evoked the charlatanic shade of that great petty-larcener of sentiment, Lawrence Sterne; for it would have been impossible to have looked more maudlingly than he did at the assembled crowd, previous to his opening oration, had we been all a set of dead asses instead of living bipeds. Lucian makes Minos, or Rhadamanthus (?), in his "Vision of Hades," hit upon the subtle torment—combining at once the spirit of retributive justice and the refinement of cruelty—of setting the spirits of the departed to perform all such tasks and occupations as were most alien from and repugnant to their tastes and actions while on earth; so that in the event of the same dynasty still continuing in the lower regions, there can be no doubt that the Reverend or irreverend (?) Lawrence is at "*these presents*" so fully employed in the exercise of all the domestic virtues—such as "loving and cherishing" his wife, and providing for and taking care of his family—that he pays no more attention to Marias and defunct donkeys than he used when on earth to his living wife and child; and that even "poor lieutenants" are as totally neglected by him as if he were the commander-in-chief and all the horse-guards rolled into one; while the infinitely more illustrious George Robins is indefatigably employed in detecting and exposing every puff that inflates our globe, and finding funds for the payment of every property which is continually being knocked down to him, at the value he himself was wont to set upon their matchless merits. Be this as it may, Mr. Kirkby, as soon as his emotion would allow him to speak, began by an-

nouncing to all who were then and there assembled, that it was "his painful—indeed, he might say, his *most* painful—duty, to offer that morning for sale, the lands, tenements, and messuages, also the personals and household furniture, of the late lamented Laird of Glenfern." Here the face of the Archdeacon and that of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars were partially hid within the folds of their handkerchiefs; nor was it till the auctioneer specified individually the first lot he should offer for their "liberal competition," that their undivided attention seemed roused, and bestowed upon him.

"And now, ladies and gentlemen," continued Mr. Kirkby, pointing with his hammer to the finely-carved altar table and chairs, "this first lot that I shall present to your notice is not only unique, I may fairly say throughout Europe, for its intrinsic beauty and worth, but derives an additional, I had almost said *sacred* value, from the circumstance of their late lamented owner having piously intended them as a gift to his parish church, nobly preferring to embellish a place of public worship, to selfishly reserving them, as many might have done, and, indeed would have been quite justified in doing, for the decoration of their own private chapel. I feel, ladies and gentlemen, that it is absolutely giving them away; but shall I, as a commencement, say £60?"

"Seventy!" cried the Archdeacon.

"Eighty!" from Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars.

A bow, first to one and then to the other, from Mr. Kirkby; when Jacob Jacobs stood forth, and stretching out his hand towards the auctioneer, as he bowed round the room generally to the assembled crowd, requested to be heard.

"Rascal!" muttered the Archdeacon; unfortunately we have no Jews' Disabilities Bill here, and the fellow is on his own ground of chaffering and cheating."

Utterly unconscious of this murmured panegyric, Jacobs, in a rich, clear, and admirably modulated voice, addressing himself to Kirkby, said—

"I cannot but regret—a regret in which I feel sure that all now present will most fully and cordially participate—that this lot should ever have been offered for sale this day; as you truly say, sir, the intentions of the late owner respecting it, impart to it a sacred character, which surely should have been in itself a sufficient guarantee against sacrilegious appearances here to-day. My creed, as I need not inform you, is not yours; but as a worshipper of the ONE, SAME, TRUE, AND ONLY GOD, I cannot allow any vessels, originally destined for His Temple, to be further profaned; therefore, I herewith beg to purchase this lot for £85, and will myself present it to your Church at Glenfern, from whence, its original destination, it should never have been turned aside." As he finished speaking, and firmly deposited the bundle of notes on the auctioneer's desk, loud "Hear! hears!" clapping of hands, knocking of sticks against the floor, and cries of "Bravo!" "Well done *Moses!*" and other ejaculations of applause, ran round the room, in which even Mr. Kirkby, not to be out of the fashion, joined; but, as he himself said, "business is business, and he was sorry, therefore, to refuse Mr. Jacobs' offer, so handsomely made. But *really*, £85 was too little for a lot that in the natural course of events *must* have gone up to £300 or £400.

"It is quite enough," said Jacobs, firmly, enforcing the assertion by knocking his stick somewhat energetically on the floor; "quite enough for what every one will readily own should *never* have been here."*

* To show that I have invented nothing, and only added a few pounds to this Jew's *Christian* feeling, I subjoin the following facts, extracted some two years ago from a Lincoln paper; where, it appears to me, the conduct of Mr. Benjamins, the *real* Simon Pure, is even more noble than the manner in which I have taken the liberty of stating it. Would that many Christians would "go and do likewise:"—

LIBERALITY OF A JEW.—At the sale of the valuable collection of the late Mr. C. Mainwaring, of Coleby, Lincoln, which has already extended over nineteen days, a series of lots, ten in number, were catalogued for sale, and headed as having been intended for Hackthorne Church;

More and louder "Hear! hears!" gave full assent to this appeal; and Robert Vallory, making his way through the crowd, and begging to shake hands with the honest Israelite, assured him that he, as the principal executor, after the feeling of gratitude and admiration his truly liberal conduct had excited in him, would, so far from opposing, warmly second his noble and generous intentions.

they consisted of an altar table, of Spanish mahogany, elaborately carved, two splendid chairs, devotional stools, &c., and cost the late proprietor nigh £300. The surprise of the public was great that these lots should be offered for sale, the intention of Mr. Mainwaring being so well known, and the name of the parish carved upon part of the furniture; but the intended donor dying intestate, his executors ordered the sale of all his effects, without reserve. A lesson was however taught them on Thursday, by Mr. Benjamin Benjamins, a Jew broker of London. On lot 3122 being put up, Mr. Benjamins addressed the auctioneer, and said the lot now put up, together with the nine following ones, were intended by the late Mr. Mainwaring as a present to Hackthorne Church, and he regretted, as he believed every one in that room did, that the articles had not been presented to the church, instead of being offered for sale that day. He therefore now begged to say that it was his intention to buy the whole, and present them himself to the Christian temple or church at Hackthorne, and he therefore asked the auctioneer to put up the ten lots in one. This proposal was received with much applause by the company, upon whom it came quite unexpectedly. Mr. Legh, one of the coheirs, begged to be allowed to join Mr. Benjamins in his very handsome offer. The auctioneer, finding the company not averse to the proposal, put up the ten lots in one, and called on Mr. Benjamins to name his bidding. Mr. Benjamins then offered £10 for the whole, at which nominal sum the auctioneer paused, and said that it was out of character; but Mr. Benjamins replied that he had offered quite enough, for that the articles ought never to have been in the catalogue, and that it was discreditable to the parties who had permitted it, and he was sure that neither Christian nor Jew would oppose him, and that the auctioneer might knock the lot down to him as soon as he liked. This the auctioneer found was the case, and the hammer went down amidst loud cheers. Mr. Benjamins immediately handed over the order for their delivery to the vicar of the parish, and thus a Jew presented to a Christian church articles that otherwise would have produced a sum little short of £200.

This announcement was received with fresh acclamations, and Mr. Kirkby, as in duty bound, of course yielded to those in authority over him, and so resigned the table and chairs to their worthy purchaser ; while I felt so proud of my new acquaintance, upon whose integrity I could from the first have staked my existence, that to publicly associate myself with him in this the first flush of his triumph, I felt would almost amount to a species of vain *egotism* ; so I contented myself with bestowing upon him from the place where I stood, a look of respectful admiration, and reserving any more vivid expressions of both feelings till we should find ourselves alone.

Meanwhile, how fared it with the Archdeacon ? - Why, well, of course ; as it invariably does with those men who are exactly cut out for the precise times in which they live ; and such an one was the venerable the Archdeacon Panmuir ; for never was he known to lag behind in any *popular* movement ; that is, when the said movement had been carried *nem. con.*,—for even the Reform Bill itself, under those circumstances, had had his support ; and it is not, perhaps, too much to affirm, that had the much dreaded Chartists of the memorable 10th of April, 1848, succeeded in emptying the Bank of England into their own pockets, and taking possession of Buckingham Palace, instead of so shamefully leaving the tents erected for the killed ! and wounded ! in the Tower of London, untenanted by one of their own or their adversaries' legions, the reverend gentleman might not only have become their champion, but their chaplain ! and have said grace before those who, otherwise, would have found none ! Consequently, on the present occasion, feeling that the carvings had for ever eluded his grasp, he wisely resolved upon gilding the opportunity which had presented itself of gaining—or at least of *courting*—a little popularity, and the former and the latter, most men, both in love and politics, deem synonymous where *they* are *individually* concerned ; and, being a dignitary of the Church, he naturally considered that he was the fittest person to represent its dignity. So, advancing some

steps, with his right hand oratorically extended in a manner that could not fail to command universal attention, he, in "*a neat and appropriate speech*," addressed Jacob Jacobs, and expressed—not, indeed, *his* gratitude (for with all his faults he was too much of a gentleman to stoop to the meanness of falsehood) but that of the parish of Glenfern—for his truly noble conduct that morning; for "*truly noble conduct*" was the cue, and therefore he feared being out in his part if he modified it into any other expression. And such are the wonderful times in which we live, that, by the following morning but one, an account of the transaction, with the Archdeacon's speech in full, and innumerable "Hear, hears," modelled upon Mrs. Primrose's jewels, in the family picture,—that is, as many as the artist could throw in for nothing, was at all the leading newspaper offices in London; and, although the *facts* of Jacobs' conduct were duly chronicled, yet, somehow or other, there was such a wizard or magic light thrown over the whole affair, as to make it appear as if Archdeacon Panmuir had taken the initiative in this generous proceeding, but *how* this was managed, Heaven, the reverend gentleman, and the printer's devil, only knew.

The Archdeacon was scarcely reseated, and Mr. Kirkby was recommencing with a flourish of his badge of office, when his proceedings were again interrupted by a fresh arrival, in the person of a stout, florid, rather bald, open-countenanced, and evidently "*well-to-do*" personage, in a dark brown surtout and purple cravat, who, holding up his finger to the auctioneer, as much as to say "Stop!" next apologized for this interruption, and said he wished to know, upon the part of the Duke of Liddesdale, whose agent he was, whether the house and furniture of Glenfern would not be sold altogether as they stood with the estate.

"Certainly, sir; I believe so," replied Mr. Kirkby, "provided anything like an equal value can be obtained for the furniture, compared with what would have been realized by its sale in detail; but Messrs. Vallory and Gibert, the executors,

are the proper persons to apply to ; and, being here, I am sure will be happy to afford you every information on the subject."

Whereupon Robert Vallory came forward, and bowing to the stranger, said, "Whom have I the pleasure of addressing?"

"My name is Tuffnell, sir, as I have just stated to this gentleman. I am agent to the Duke of Liddesdale; and his grace, having heard of the sale of the Glenfern estate, wishes, if possible, to purchase the house and furniture as they stand, in order to avoid the trouble of refurnishing, as he wants the places for a shooting-box."

"The Duke of Liddesdale!" repeated Vallory; "I was under the impression that he was still a minor, and being brought up in some strange way at a German university."

"No longer a minor," replied the other, "for he is now nearly three-and-twenty; but he is still abroad, and has been educated chiefly at Bonn; for the Duchess, his mother, had peculiar ideas about education, which, from her long widowhood, and the equally long minority of her son, she has had ample opportunities of carrying out; and I must say, her plan appears to have succeeded, as far as having made of the young Duke a thoroughly excellent member of society."

"Oh, indeed!—Well, I'm sure, I should be very glad, then, that he became the possessor of Glenfern; but, you see, our object is to get as much as we possibly can for the furniture and personals, as from them will be the only benefit Miss Panmuir will derive from this unfortunately compulsory sale."

"Well, I think I may say, without exceeding my warrant, that his grace would be the last man to take any advantage, or even allow any advantage to be taken, under such circumstances; but no doubt this gentleman (turning to Kirkby) has a duplicate inventory of the furniture, wines, personals, &c.; one specifying the original cost of each item, and the other that at which they were to be offered for sale; and it appears to me that the fairest way, and one that cannot fail to meet any and every objection, would be to take the *former*, and give the exact sum the total amounts to."

"Very handsome, indeed; nothing can be more so," said Vallory; "and as all here, I feel very sure, had but one wish in attending this melancholy sale, namely, that of benefiting the orphan sister of the late laird of Glenfern, I have no doubt there will not be any opposition offered to this arrangement."

Nor was there, except on the part of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, who, with a sharp "D—n it!" exclaimed "But that's not fair, as I, for one, wished to purchase many things which I know Miss Panmuir must have valued, in order to give them back to her."

"A very laudable intention, sir," replied Mr. Tuffnell, calmly; "and there is no earthly reason why it should not be carried out; therefore, if any friend of the family's will have the kindness to mark off in the inventory those articles which were more especially prized by their possessors, *theirs* they shall still remain."

A murmur of applause ran round the room; Mr. Cecil Trevilian actually exerted himself to such a pitch, as to say in a distinct and articulate voice, "Well, that is devilish handsome, 'pon my soul!"

As an accompaniment to which, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars kept vehemently pulling his under lip; till suddenly he cried out, with a sardonic grin on his face, and a cold sneer in his voice, as if he thought he had found a plan to baffle the agent at last—

"And pray, may one be allowed to inquire what is the sum at which the furniture and personals are valued?"

"Have I your permission, gentlemen?" asked Mr. Kirkby, appealing to Mr. Tuffnell, and Robert Vallory.

"Oh, certainly," said they both in a breath.

Whereupon the auctioneer, carelessly flipping back the marble-papered cover of the inventory book, read aloud—"The Lands, Tenements, and Messuages of the Estate of Glenfern, £42,000.

The Furniture, including Pictures, Plate, and Wines, £8,413.

"Nine thousand!" vociferated Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars.

"Pardon me, sir," interposed Kirkby; "but you forget that competition has been abandoned; and that Glenfern and all its appurtenances have, by the consent of the executors and all present, become the property of his grace the Duke of Liddesdale."

Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had *not* forgotten anything of the kind; or he never would have made so munificent a bid; on the contrary, it was the recollection of this safeguard of impossibility which had induced him to do so; but this sterling offer on his part had had such an effect upon the weak nerves of his poor friend, Trevylian, who had a much truer knowledge and clearer perception of the clever man's *pecuniary*, than of his mental resources; that he faded back into his normal state of languor, as he whispered to Ferrars—"Good gwacious, my dear fellow! are you mad? Where the deuce would you have got nine thousand pounds! I don't thuppothe if we were all sold up at Twinty, including our meerschauts, we should realithe half the thum!"

"You *are* such a d—d ass, Trevylian!" was the complimentary rejoinder.

"At all eventh, my dear Ferrars," retorted the other, good-humouredly, "I'm an *ath* who often furnish *you* with a *pony*."

"My dear fellow! you alarm me!" said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, seizing his companion's hand and feeling his pulse: "I really fear you are becoming clever!"

"Oh, no! only a case of contact; like the Persian simile you and Benaraby are always quoting about: I'm not the *wose*, but I've lived near it;" and I'm *not* clever, only I've lived near *you*; and you know you're devilish *near*,—eh, old fellow?" and he illustrated the fact, by a poke in Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' ribs.

"And you *far*, very far, from being in the critical state I thought you," sneered that gentleman over his shoulder, at his handsome friend.

I was so much amused at this colloquy that I should have continued to listen to it, had not my attention been arrested by seeing the Archdeacon shuffle up to Mr. Tuffnell; for, it appeared, there was still balm in Gilead for the former in the reflection that Glenfern had at all events passed into ducal hands! He now wished to know from Mr. Tuffnell, when the Duke might be expected at Glenfern.

Mr. Tuffnell really didn't know.

"Because," persisted Samuel Panmuir, "if his Grace thinks of coming at all this season, however late, I would make a point of remaining, at any inconvenience to myself, to give him the *carte du pays*, and point out all the best haunts of the grouse."

"You are very good, sir," replied the agent; "but it would be a thousand pities you should put yourself to any inconvenience, seeing the time of the Duke's coming is so very uncertain; if, indeed, he should come at all this year; for, as I before told you, he is abroad just now, and therefore I'm sure he would feel annoyed that there should be any unnecessary hurry in the family's removing from Glenfern."

"Oh! thank you," said the Archdeacon curtly; "but they *have* removed, they went two days ago; and as soon as Miss Panmuir's health will admit of her making the journey, they will return to London with me, where my clerical duties demand my presence; but perhaps at some future period, when his Grace is *not* here, he would kindly allow my fair cousin to revisit these scenes of her childhood, to which she is naturally much attached?"

And this coarse and clumsy compromise of Edith's womanly dignity, the reverend gentleman thought a masterly stroke towards harpooning the ducal coronet for her, which he had already so vividly sketched into his aerial fabrics.

Mr. Tuffnell said he was sure the Duke would have much pleasure in doing so.

Whereupon, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars (for the two Cantabs had joined the group) asked with one of his most bitter sneers,

if the Duke would not rather prefer being there, when Miss Panmuir came.

"Perhaps he might, sir," said Mr. Tuffnell, sternly; "but being a *gentleman*, the Duke of Liddesdale has too much respect for the sex, ever to obtrude himself upon any lady, and still less to presume to make free with the name of an absent one."

Another, but this time a silent sneer, was the only reply the clever man vouchsafed to this well-merited reproof; while his handsome companion, arranging his hat with both hands as scrupulously as if he had been poising the equilibrium of a world, or adjusting the balance of power between two nations, said in a voice between a yawn and a sigh—

"Egad! I know I wish I was Duke of Liddesdale, and she should never leave the place at all."

Whereat there was a general laugh; when Mr. Tuffnell again came to the rescue, saying—

"But the young lady, sir, as this gentleman will tell you" (turning to Kirkby,)—"there are two words to every bargain,—*she* might not consent."

"Oh, hang it! every girl liketh every fellow who ith a duke."

And having uttered this truly national axiom—the upshot of all our systems of education—Mr. Trevelyian caressed his off whisker; while the agent, who appeared to be a bit of a wag, rejoined—

"Or I suppose if they don't like the '*fellow*' they like the *duke*! Is that what you mean?"

"Ah! yeth, exactly; that's the thort of thing I *do* mean."

"*Do* come away, you *are* such a d—d ass, Trevelyian!" said his amiable friend, pulling him away; but the other, suddenly stopping, lisped out—

"Now ath they thay you're tho clever, Ferrars, I wish you'd find thomething *new* to say to me; for you've told me that tho

often, that 'pon my word it sticks in my throat like one of Mother Prescott's stale mutton pies."

The laugh was now turned against Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars; and, as like all persons little scrupulous in hurting the feelings of others, he could not bear the slightest approach to a jest at his own expense, he left his companion to follow as he listed, and stalked away with the evanescent rapidity of a phantom.

The Archdeacon then informed the dispersing crowd, that he should preach his farewell sermon at Glenfern Church on the following Sunday. This announcement did not appear to awaken any poignant feelings of regret among the audience; and, indeed, the sermon itself, which I afterwards had the benefit of hearing, left "their withers equally unwrung," although it contained a sort of left-handed compliment to Jacob Jacobs; as in a sweeping animadversion upon the Jewish people in general, and the people called Jews in particular, he treated Jacobs as the exception that proved the rule; and as Amy Verner truly said, he could not preach a sermon, even were it about Persians or potatoes, without having a fling at the "Papists." In alluding to the new altar-pieces, he warned them against the black and Popish heresy of worshipping carved images, which of course was highly *necessary* and strikingly appropriate for a congregation of rigid, and therefore already sufficiently intolerant, Presbyterians! wo to the theologians of the Samuel Panmuir school! for, as Sidney Smith truly observes, "the man who places religion upon a false basis, is the greatest enemy to religion."

But to return to the auction room, where "my occupation was gone." As there was nothing to be bought, I left Mr. Tuffnell concluding his business with the executors and Kirkby, and prepared to return to the "Panmuir Arms;" and just as the Archdeacon got into his carriage, I offered my arm to my new friend Jacobs; and as we descended the glen together, slightly incommoded by the dust from the reverend gentleman's

orthodox chariot wheels, I thought to myself, as I looked at my companion—verily!

“THIS MAN WENT DOWN TO HIS HOUSE JUSTIFIED, RATHER THAN THE OTHER.”

NOTICE.

READER! it is now four years since you and I parted at the sale at Glenfern, consequently *you* have had time to rest—I to grow more weary; but also to bind up my gleanings, which I shall present you in a few more of what good Mrs. Verner calls parables; having become acquainted, again to quote from that good lady, with the following “*facts*,” partly from Edith Panmuir’s own mouth, partly from observation, and also from other and various sources. I have thought it better to drop the egotisms of the personal pronoun, and amalgamate the events into a narrative wherein I shall only occasionally mention myself as one of the actors, in scenes which have been going on stirringly; though you and I, friend reader, have so long lingered by the way—but what of that? our business is not for that reason one whit the less important! Horace, you know (or if you don’t, I now tell it to you), accompanied Mæcenas on most pressing business, and yet he loitered by the way, and confesses the fact rather vauntingly than otherwise:—

“Hoc iter ignavi divisimus alius ac nos Præcinetis unum, minus est gravis appia tardis.”

But I have this signal advantage over Horace, namely, that if *you*, dear reader (which of course means the public at large, unnaturally compressed into the narrow limits of an individual!) only become *my* Mæcenas, I shall assuredly be *minus* nothing, and you I hope not much beyond a few leisure hours, and, it may be, a prejudice seized here and there, as contraband at the different harbours of truth into which we shall have to sail.

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

PARABLE THE SECOND.

SECTION I.

"Ye are not under the law."—*Gal. v. 18.*

Manhood, with growing years, brings change of mind;
Seeks riches, friends; with thirst of honour
And all the meanness of ambition knows;
Prudent and wary, on each deed intent,
Fearful to act, and afterwards repent.

Translated from Horace's "De Arte Poetica."

"Adite (populus) hæc inquit susarion
Malar sunt mulieres, veruntamen O populares
Hoc sine malo domum inhabitare non licet."
Stolico.

WELL, *by Jove!* my dear fellow, I congratulate you, for your 'First Love' was a decided hit!" cried Mr. Cecil Trevylian, bursting into Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' chambers at the Albany, where that gentleman sat in a high-backed Elizabethan arm-chair, his heels upon the mantelpiece (for if Brother Jonathan goes a-head more than we do, young England goes *a-heel* quite as much as he does); a Turkish tobacco bag hung over one knob of the chair, and himself, like Jupiter on Olympus, enveloped in clouds equally of his own making,—and he being also the thunderer of his peculiar sphere, like the other *tonans*, he too was surrounded by satellites. A wonderful man! was Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, so he himself thought, and so he said, till

the saying became an echo, and the echo at length passed for a fact—as most echoes do in time. In the short space of four years, he had got into Parliament for the borough of Frothington; written four fashionable novels, three *weighty* articles for the Edinburgh; composed many speeches, which though nature had denied him the power of *speaking*, *cleverness* gave him the power of puffing; so that when they appeared in the papers—like a plain woman in society who is the model of good dressing—they did not fail to be talked about, and cited as a precedent: nor did he himself; which was the point for which he steered; being well aware, that *to be* talked about, is to arrive at the half-way house to the Temple of Fame, where the most indefatigable traveller on that steep and slippery road, may then take his ease at his inn; for few are sufficient *connoisseurs* in reputation to distinguish between *notoriety* and *celebrity*. But his great card had been a pamphlet containing a severe philippic, not to say lampoon, against the ministry; as all ministrys know—whatever else they may *not* know—that these sort of *brochures* in the political world, are equivalent to the placards “FOR SALE,” which are constantly to be seen pasted upon some of those neglected vehicles, or other conveniences which cumber the causeways about the environs of the Metropolis. Accordingly, the ministry took the hint; and Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was inducted into a commissionership of cauliflowers, or some other equally *improvisé* and important little sinecure of a thousand a year. And then it was quite charming to see the amiable candour with which he denounced his own superficial view of the great Tobacco-pipe Question, upon which he had so ignorantly vituperated the incapacity of the Legislature; and how gracefully he unsaid every word he had said in the pamphlet; and the scales having fallen from his eyes into the hands of Justice! how he found that *all* the members of the administration, to a man, were Solons and Solomons. His schemes, or rather scheme, for it was a universal whole—his scheme, then, for getting on, though elaborate and complicated as the ma-

chinery of Charlemagne's great clock, he knew would be nothing, on that very account, without a mainspring; that mainspring, his intelligence soon discovered must be a *clique*, for union is strength; but to make the pivot impregnable, he resolved its rivet should be THE PRESS—which he was well aware, in point of occult machinations and omnipotent power from which there is no appeal, was to England in the nineteenth, what the Inquisition and the Council of Ten were to Venice in the fifteenth century, with perhaps the more popular and clap-trap motto of "*Fiat Lux*;" but it is nevertheless only the light of a dark lantern; convenient indeed for discovering treasure, but equally so for concealing iniquity, as all light must be, whose shining, or eclipse, depends solely on the caprice of the individuals who wield it.

As a quack practitioner, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars knew the constitution of his patient, the Press, thoroughly, having felt its pulse so often; and was therefore well aware, that with a *series* of good dinners, there are few things that it cannot digest; and by mysterious process of *typical* electro-biology, get the public to do so too, till the latter, when told by the former, that black is white; or murder is benevolence; or vice is virtue; or any other chimera;—religiously believe them to be such. And as the English call themselves a thinking people (!), each individual has his thinking machine, that is, his or her particular newspaper, magazine or review, which decides every question for them, and so saves Mr. Bull collectively from the trouble of forming an opinion of his own. Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars and his clique reaped such a golden harvest from the fabrication of these thinking machines, that they kept up a great pother about removing the taxes on knowledge or stamp duties; because then there would be, if possible, a still greater sale than there already was for these thinking machines, on which they generously lavished so much virtue, morality, and good feeling, that they had not a single particle left for their own personal use; but what matter, since like the ass that carried the relics, *they cut a*

prominent figure in the procession of human advancement; and as long as they pursued their course laden with such precious things, it was little odds to a delighted public that *they* should be among the lowest beasts of the creation. No one had a better theoretical knowledge of human nature than Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars—that is, as far as any one can acquire it, who while always ranting about that impossible thing its *perfectability*, is yet an utter sceptic to the struggling good it *really does possess*. And it was from this knowledge, that he resolved never in after life, to lose sight of his school or college friends;—not that such early ties had any spells wherewith to bind so superior a mind *as his*, but he knew they were strong as adamant to the more ordinary calibre of organizations! besides, these friendships—as the world, and *associations* as he called them; “*told well in one’s social commerce.*” And just as everything, however apparently incongruous, is of use in creation—so the clever man determined to follow the same plan in that antitype of the universe, the construction of his own fortunes; the brains of those who had any, served to tessellate the great arena of his ambition; and if they had none, like poor Trevelyian, why then they had connexions, or money, which served as a pretty relief, or a bright gilding, to the mosaic of his self-hood. Or even should it so happen, that they had not any one of these even; then, as in the old Roman roads or the modern McAdamized ones, they did for filling-up rubbish, to make the foundation of His path the firmer. Yet, as heart is the only magnet that really attracts affection, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had for a long time an uphill task of it; for his very success (as success always does at its dawn) created him enemies; as it is only of the meridian sun, that the world, slower than the Persians, become the worshippers. But at last, like Caius Gracchus, though both hated and feared, even the more discriminating became subdued by the man’s indomitable energy and perseverance, accomplishing, as he did, each of his Herculean labours, as if he had had but that one particular

thing to master and attend to; while the indiscriminating mass were mystified and fascinated by "the number (to borrow Plutarch's words about his prototype) of ambassadors, artificers, architects, artists, and magistrates, by which he was followed;" and so paid their crowning tribute to his amazing industry, and the almost miraculous celerity of his operations. The last of which had been, the five-act play, upon whose success Mr. Trevelyian had so cordially congratulated him on entering. No wonder it had succeeded, for—besides being altered from the French, who are always highly dramatic and telling in their stage incidents, its retailer having given it merely a coarser and broader plot to suit the English stage—it had been *pronéd* and puffed for weeks before it was acted; and put upon the stage by a manager who was himself an incarnate puff, and with a *mise en scène* which had amounted to several thousand pounds—so costly was it to its minutest details. To this adaptation he had given the very nambypamby and untaking title of "First Love;" but this was only the lion dallying somewhat ostentatiously with his strength, such a name would have done a play of anybody else's; but then Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was not anybody else—of which satisfactory circumstance he was himself perfectly aware—and therefore knew, that had he called his play "Bath Bun," *Sucre de Pomme*, or even Sally Lunn! it would have gone down with the public, just the same; and, like the latter, have been lauded and discussed at innumerable tea-tables. With somewhat questionable taste, his description of the heroine was an inventory of Edith Panmuir; not but that for the written description any one would have discovered the slightest resemblance, in the clumsy and very vulgar-looking dark haired actress who personated the "Eva" of the play; but it was part of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' theoretical knowledge of human nature to believe, that no flattery could be too broad and glaring in the *fact*, for any woman; provided it were not so in the tone and manner. His moral perceptions ran also in a parallel channel, for there was no amount of vice and licen-

tiousness which he did not think he could set before the public in print, provided that like a statue it were but gracefully draped, or like a winter beauty, *well wrapped up*. What in a mere vulgar police report, would have terminated at the treadmill, or the penitentiary, by him—

“Tricked out in all the harlotry of taste,”

was emulated by young ladies, and expatiated on by their mammas, as “those exquisite descriptions of that dear Ferrars!”

When Trevylian entered the clever man's chambers, on the morning in question, the latter was not *tête-à-tête* with his meerschäum; he had two or three of his satellites with him, who had come on the same congratulatory errand. One was Mr. Issachar Benaraby, a gentleman of Mosaic extraction, quite as clever, in many things, as Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, and much cleverer in others: such as oratory, cool, off-hand impudence, and invincible good-temper; and, being equally unshackled by any shadow of principle, he got on briskly, with a sort of trade wind in society; while his more saturnine friend had often to tack and labour at the pumps to weather the storm his own execrable temper and overbearing spirit had raised. Mr. Benaraby's political opinions (at least for the time being) were conservative; but his principles (?) were decidedly free-trade, as they were open to, and available for, any and every market where they could fetch their price. He began his career by a diametrically opposite road to his friend; for, whereas, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars winced under, and could not brook the slightest merriment at his own expense, but tried to awe every one into an overwhelming deference for his august person! Mr. Benaraby more wisely preferred the “short cut to popularity,” and rather sought to be laughed at than otherwise, being of Cardinal de Retz's opinion, that

“Qui fait rire l'esprit, est Maître du Cœur.”

And, besides, he was well aware that if he devoted his exterior to the laughing hyænas of society, and allowed them their mirth at all his ruffles and his ringlets, and the other tomfooleries of his costume, it only made his wit and wisdom, by force of contrast, tell with double effect, like the withering political sarcasms of the Neapolitan *Policcinello*, which come trebly barbed from so unexpected and grotesque a source. Mr. Benaraby was lolling back in his chair, the hind legs of which alone touched the ground, while he kept his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, and hurled out, without moving a muscle of his own countenance, Pelion upon Ossa, stunners! that kept his companions in a roar. On his left sat a young man, with red hair, in spectacles, and rather handsome features, but so exceedingly sharp, that they looked like a sample puff of one of Mechi's razors. He was a college chum of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, a Mr. Cæsar Coakington, who had been some time called to the bar, for which he was eminently calculated, having, as it were, been born a lawyer; and could not have been more "wide awake" had he been nursed by Chicane, and weaned upon Quibble. When Trevelyian entered, he was showing his very fine teeth in a loud laugh, at some triad that had fallen from Mr. Benaraby, about Cheops, plum-pudding, and the Corn-laws; while opposite to him sat, as if not quite at his ease on so fine a chair, and in so aristocratic a room, a Mr. Carlo Dials, another star of the literary hemisphere, who, having graduated about the streets, his *pavé* pictures were unsurpassed; he had obtained the *sobriquet* of the Aldgate Aristophanes—the pot-house Plutarch would have been more appropriate. Like the rest of the Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' clique, he thought to redeem, by printed morality and philanthropic fine sentiments the practical immorality of his own life, and the arid absence of all good feeling. He was not agreeable in society, as he always, like the beggars, appeared to be keeping any stray good thing that he might chance to pick up till he got home, when it was duly "booked;" or it might be that his hair, of which

he had an immense profusion, overlaid his brains, and that that made him appear stupid. This quartett, just before Trevylian's invasion, had been forming an imaginary ministry, of which, having everything in his own gift, it is needless to say that Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was Premier; and, after *that*, Chancellorships of the Exchequer, and Duchy of Lancaster, with Home, Colonial, and Foreign Secretaries, flew about like autumn leaves, and he let his friends help themselves; though rather more especially favouring Mr. Cæsar Coakington, by flinging him a sofa pillow for a woollack, and thereby dubbing him Lord Chancellor; however, "the house rose," when Trevylian burst in with—

"By Jove! my dear fellow, I congratulate you, for your 'First Love' was a decided hit!"

"How unnatural!" said Benaraby, solemnly, "for one's first love is generally a decided *Miss*—not that *mine* was; for girls do nothing for one in society, and then, altogether, it is such a confounded mixture! Muslin and mammas, bread-and-butter and brothers, milk-and-water and marriage settlements, parchments and parsons! Ugh! No, thank you; my digestion is too weak. As an Oriental traveller, and a citizen of the world, I don't mind, when needs must, lunching off a young alligator, or even supping upon an old hippopotamus; *but* I have no fancy for the Benedictine order."

"Quite right, my dear fellow! Married women bore one less; besides, *ça ne tire pas à conséquence*, it is only as one gets old oneself, that youth becomes so attractive; and that that of others seems to replace our own," puffed Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, fiatcally, as if he had already prudently laid by a supply of vice for his old age.

"Well now, really Ferrars! I'm surprised at hearing *you* cry down girls; I only know, were I you," said Trevylian, "my brain would be almost turned, at thinking that my play was the first place where that charming little Panmuir girl had appeared this season."

"With regard to your brain being turned, my dear Trevyl-ian," rejoined Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, shrouding that young gentleman in a cloud of smoke as he spoke :—"I should recommend your investing five shillings in the purchase of Mrs. Glass ; and following her directions for dressing a hare ; by 'first catching your brain ;' and next, I do wish you would leave off that d—d habit of yours, of talking of all women as if they were opera dancers ; if you must speak of that lady, can't you call her Miss Panmuir ; and not that little Panmuir girl, as if she were a Bohemian broom-girl ; or some moden Nell Gwynne, about the purlieus of Covent Garden."

Now, it may be inferred from this, that Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had at least sufficient virtue to have some respect for good women, upon the rare occasions which he associated with them ; no such thing, for in the first place, like all other profligates, he did not believe in their goodness ; while on the other hand, he was the most ultra-stickler (as all bad men are) for female propriety : for a modest woman to look, smile, or move, however innocently, was denounced by him as levity, and moreover, he and his clique, as well as the Curmudgeon, or Brummagem German clique, did all they possibly could, on every occasion, to lower and degrade women in public estimation, for every woman who did not remain within what they considered should be the proper tariff of female nullity and inanity, were sure to be held up to ridicule by them, as "*strong-minded women*," which opprobrious epithet means precisely what it says ; namely, that it is considered high treason, by self-arrogated masculine superiority, that women should have any mind, or any strength at all.

Indeed, America, and France, are the only two countries which nationally exalt women as a sex ; and, in so doing, they will reap their just reward ; for the former will soon be what it is fast becoming, the greatest and most enlightened country in the world ; and the latter will re-generate itself into the pre-eminent position, which from its infinite resources, and its grace-

ful, apt, genial, and popular adaptation of them, it deserves to hold among the great empires of progress and civilization.

But the real reason of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' dislike to having Edith's name so lightly mentioned, was not out of any proper respect for her personally, or as a woman; but because he at that time did her the honor of allowing her to pre-occupy his thoughts; consequently, by an inverse ratio, any disrespect from *another* towards her, seemed a sort of jostling of his *own* dignity.

"Allah! Il Allah!" exclaimed Benaraby, removing his thumbs from his arm-pits, and levelling his tortoiseshell eyeglass at Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars; which, by the bye, seemed a very superfluous appendage to him, whose eyes were by no means prominent, or near-sighted looking; but dark and brilliant, and of that oblong shape, fringed with light, like the dark pieces in a harlequin's dress bound with silver. "Allah! Il Allah! but by the coffin of Mahomet! you amaze me, Ferrars! You have not been reading Richardson, and caught the Grandisons! surely; that you should delegate yourself master of the ceremonies, for the proper introduction of young ladies' names to young gentlemen's ears?"

"Go, my dear fellow," rejoined the other, with a ghastly smile; "but it's so devilish low, and slang, talking of women in society in that way."

"Slang! Oh, sir, you *do me proud*," said Mr. Carlo Dials, rising and bowing to the ground, with mock solemnity, previous to placing his right thumb against the tip of his nose, and the left against his little finger, and playing an imaginary fantasia, as one of the juvenile heroes of his own books might have done; whereat the assembled party all laughed, as in duty bound, when any St. Giles's pearls, or pig-nuts, fell from so chartered an individual.

"Well, but about *Miss* Panmuir, and your play," resumed Trevylian, as soon as the laugh at Mr. Carlo Dials' wit (?) was over.

"Pshaw! never mind my play!" said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, peevishly, dashing the ashes out of his pipe with unnecessary vengeance on the hob; and then he added, with a forced laugh: "We were rehearsing a drama that we all hope to act in one of these days; when you came in, and caused a split in our cabinet, we were planning what we would do, when we came into office; and I was apologizing to Benaraby that I could not make him Premier, and be it myself too! and, indeed, after his able speech, and victory over the Manchester faction, the other night, in the House, he deserves something paramount."

"Don't mention it, pray; no apologies, my dear fellow; and may *you* retain your *present* eminent position *still*, when I shall, in the course of time, have succeeded in climbing as far as a Secretary at War, or Chancellor of the Exchequership, or some little molehill of that sort."

The covered sarcasm of this speech, and the imperturbable *sang froid* with which it was uttered, elicited a roar of laughter from the whole party, and more especially from Mr. Cæsar Coakington, in which Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was, in self-defence, obliged to join.

"Well, but to return to my *eminent* position," said the latter, attempting a postscript to his late compulsory laugh, "anything in my gift, my dear Benaraby, shall be at your service. You have only to choose what it shall be."

"Thank you for nothing, said the Gallipot," asided Mr. Carlo Dials.

"Clearly so," laughed the embryo Lord Chancellor.

"Oh! thank you; any little thing," replied Benaraby, with one of his most serious and earnest looks; "I'm not proud—why should I be? Epaminondas, after his victory over the Mantineans, accepted a commissionership of sewers at Thebes; and I, after mine over the Manchesterians, am quite ready to superintend the Board of Scavengers in London, or do anything else to 'make myself generally useful,' as all servants *out of place* say, who never mean to do anything in place."

Another laugh followed this speech, and, at its close, Trevelylian, like a child assiduously returning to a forbidden subject, or a dog incontinently bringing to light objects especially intended to be buried in oblivion, cried out,—

“Oh! while I think of it, I wanted to ask you, Ferrars, who that devilish good-looking fellow was that came into the Panmure’s box last night?”

“Good looking!” almost screamed Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, his eyes flaming, and he wasting at least an ounce of Latakai on the carpet by his ineffectual efforts to fill his pipe without looking either at it or the tobacco bag. “*Well!* if *that’s* your idea of good looking, I thought him the ~~de~~—dest snob I’d ever seen!”

“You don’t mean Lord Ernest Clare, do you?” said Mr. Cæsar Coakington to Trevelylian.

“Oh no! I know *him*; Besides, *he’s* fair, and this man is dark, and, I think, *particularly* gentlemanlike, though Ferrars calls him a snob; he’s anything but *that*, though there *is* something peculiar about him certainly; though what it is I can’t tell.”

“I’ll tell you,” said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, first sending forth such a tremendous blast from his pipe, as would have quite done for King Jammie’s ‘counter blast,’ “his peculiarity is, that he appears to be a cross-breed between an English Methodist Parson and an Italian Contadina.

“I own I can’t trace the Methodist parson, but there *is* something foreign about him certainly, at least, *un-English*, though very slightly so; and people *do* discover such extraordinary, out-of-the-way likenesses for a fellow. Now, there’s Lady Bab Farington says that *I* look a something between a persecuted primitive Christian, and a disconsolate modern dandy.”

“You may kiss the book and swear to it! my dear fellow,” laughed Mr. Cæsar Coakington, pressing a little volume to Trevelylian’s lips, which happened to be a small pamphlet entitled, “The Toilet of Beauty,” which Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had been that morning studying.

"I think," said Benaraby, "I know the man you mean, if he is tall, slender, with intensely black or rather purple hair, that seems to have a sort of rich luxuriant bloom upon it like a cluster of Abyssinian grapes; very white forehead; straight nose; dark eyes, whose fire seems quenched in diamond water; a tinge of colour like an eastern sunset, that is red beneath, with darkness stealing over it; very white teeth; no moustache, but a dark and rather forked beard, *à la Henri Trois*; small hands and feet; and particularly graceful in his movements!"

"Prethithely! the polithe might recognithe him from your portrait. Who ith he?"

"I've met him at several places lately. He's a Mr. Lancaster."

"A son of Bell and Lancaster's, the education people, I suppose!" ha! ha'd Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, as if he had uttered the wittiest thing in the world, instead of a plagiarised bull; and he then added, between two or three parenthetical whiffs, "Ah! just the sort of fellow I could fancy constituting the delight of the Baker Street parties, and Beulah Spa pic nics."

"As *you* have not *yet* appointed me Master of the Rolls, Ferrars, I have not matriculated in Baker Street, and, therefore, it is to me a *terra incognita*. I bid—Beulah, all my wanderings having been on the *other* side Jordan, but I have met this Mr. Lancaster at some of the best places in town. The first house I saw him at was the Duchess of Diplomat's, and her *grease*, as those graceless fellows the *attachés* call her, seemed quite to overwhelm him with attention. I've also met him at the Netherbys, and at York House."

"You could not expect less of 'the aspiring blood of Lancaster,'" quoted Mr. Cæsar Coakington, who was in the habit of occasionally taking out Shakspeare with him to poach on the extremest verge of a pun.

"You astonish me! Benaraby," said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, for half a second removing his pipe from his mouth.

"It is a habit of mine, for we are in England, of which you

are a *native*, I believe?" said that gentleman, with the most refreshing coolness, again levelling his tortoiseshell eclipse at Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars.

"No, I don't mean *you*," laughed the latter; "for no one is ever astonished at *anything you* do. But I confess I am surprised to hear of your meeting such a snob as I contend this Lancaster is, at any decent place."

Here Clarke, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' valet, brought in a note which, he said, Tim had brought, and to which he was to take back an answer. His master snatched it hastily off the salver, tore it open, and seemed to run his eye diagonally over it, so as to take in its contents with a sort of ocular jump, as it were; which contents were apparently not of the most pleasing or satisfactory nature; for, biting his under lip sharply, he crumpled it up, and flung it into the fire, and, disdaining the commonplace aid of the poker, thrust it between the bars with the point of his slipper.

"Thath not one of the acth of 'firtht love,' I hope, Ferrars," drawled Trevelyian.

"D—n first love!" was the muttered reply, accompanied by a slight grinding of the teeth, and a strong clinching of the right hand.

"Any answer, sir?" asked Clarke, who had been solacing his impatience, by beating a scarcely audible homœopathic devil's tattoo against the back of the salver, which he held tamboureen-wise.

"Tell Tim to bring the cab round directly. No, the horses."

"The horses, sir?"

"Yes,—no,—stop,—stay! My horse only—I shan't want him."

"Very good, sir."

And so this admirable valet would have said of *any* of his master's proceedings, unless, indeed, his iniquity had taken the turn of not paying him his wages; for there would be little

use in serving his satanic majesty unless there was the d—l to pay.

"Well, my dear fellows, I must leave you," said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, rising; "for I'm obliged to go out."

"Sorry to hear it, my dear Ferrars," said Mr. Benaraby, between a yawn and a sigh, as he stretched his left arm above his head, and the other down towards his right boot, "for the being *obliged to go out* is one of the *very* worst *obligations* which a ministry like ours, so recently formed, can be saddled with."

"Ha! ha! ha! Clearly so!" laughed Mr. Cæsar Coakington, taking in each hand a piece of the black ribbon to which his eye-glass was suspended, so as to make it whirl round like a teetotum or a politician; for he wore a glass also, as a sort of outrider to his spectacles.

"I say, Ferrars," cried Trevylian, calling after the former, as he was going into his bed-room to complete his toilet, "I'm devilish hungry, and I meant to have lunched with you when I came."

"Well, can't you ring, and get something to eat; I believe—indeed I know—there is a cold guinea-fowl, for I did not touch it at breakfast."

After he had answered the summons, Clarke soon again reappeared with the guinea-fowl, ably supported by a *pâté de foie gras*; and Trevylian's hunger becoming an epidemic, a lobster had to be sent for, though Mr. Carlo Dials, all in favouring them with a graphically-acted scene from one of his own books, loudly voted for pickled salmon!

"Pickled salmon of a morning!" cried Trevylian, with ineffable disgust, sinking back in his chair, and pushing away his plate.

"Capital!" laughed Mr. Cæsar Coakington; "Lord Ogilby's 'hot rolls and butter in July' never was given with greater effect." And then he added, turning to that gentleman, "I say, Benaraby, I'd give you some of this white hermitage, only there's no glass."

“Glass, my dear fellow! All glasses are common-place vulgar things, except the ‘glass of fashion and the mould of form.’ I’ll just tell you how I used to manage when I was in the East.” Whereupon, he proceeded to tell them a *wondrous tale* of how he had drunk hock out of his hat on the top of the pyramids, whither he had brought a viaticum of crocodile sandwiches in his pocket-book! To the enjoyment of which legend, and the discussion of something more substantial, we will leave them.

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION II.

"My delights were with the sons of men."—Prov. viii. 31.

"Infelix operis fumma, quia ponere totum."—

L. Horatii Flacci de Arte Poetica.

WELL, gratitude *is* a great virtue, and, like all other virtues, sufficiently rare; consequently, it is pleasing to be able to record of Archdeacon Panmuir, that he *was* truly grateful to think that he had secured so many good things in the Church before the present reign, when all such pluralities were abolished. Being, therefore, a prebend of Westminster, as well as a canon of St. Paul's, he occupied one of the most spacious, as well as one of the pleasantest houses on the Mall in St. James's Park; and its handsome dining-room looked particularly pleasant upon that rare thing in London, a fine morning in May, when the horse-chestnuts were just bursting into leaf, and the sun—more fortunate than many other inferior luminaries—had actually succeeded, at last, in shining out in his proper sphere. It was the morning after Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' new play, and a supper which had been given in honour of it at the Duchess of Diplomat's, the Morning papers were all aired and laid on the breakfast-table, where Edith had not yet appeared to make the tea, Mrs. Dunbar sat by the fire tatting, while the Archdeacon paced the room, like Sir Jacob Kilmansegg; that is, he

"Seemed washing his hands with invisible soap,
In imperceptible water,"—

a species of partial and phantom ablution, to which he was much addicted when any person, thing, or subject, more than usually pre-occupied his attention. Four years had Edith now been under his roof, without one of his plans respecting her having been crowned with fruition; for to no place, private or public, with the exception of church, could she be induced to go, and even then she had the bad taste to prefer a quiet church, at the other end of the town, to either of her cousin's gorgeous cathedrals and the privilege of hearing him preach; and he was beginning sorely to repent the precipitate step, which he misnomered hospitality, that he had taken in inviting—nay, insisting upon his relatives taking up their abode with him; for Samuel Panmuir was one of a *very* numerous class, who, when they *do* “cast their bread upon the waters,” do not like waiting for the *many days* before they find it, but would like to see it forthwith return to them, much augmented in bulk, from the rippling of the silver tide of fortune. It was, therefore, a matter of great satisfaction to him that Edith had at length broken the ice and gone into public—not, indeed, to the theatre—that was of very little import, as it was not any relaxation of mind or amusement for her that he was thinking of—but that she should have appeared at the Duchess of Diplomat's afterwards, and produced as great a sensation as his most sanguine expectations could possibly have anticipated. Still—for there is always an *if* or a *but* in every human triumph—he could have wished the man whom the Duchess sent in to their box with her three lines of pencilled invitation, saying,—

“*Ma toute belle, as you have come out of your shell at last, you must sup with me to night.*—C. D.”—

had not monopolized Edith the whole evening after, keeping off so many better (which in the Archdeacon's vocabulary, meant *greater*) men; for who, and what was he, after all?—nothing but a plain Mister, and one perfectly unknown for much, and long as the reverend gentleman had been about town, he had never, till the previous evening, seen him; consequently, he

could be no one worth seeing, or knowing—for if the *crème de la crème* were to be met at the Duchess of Diplomat's, there were also plenty of detrimental, such as younger brothers, unpaid red tapeists, heiress-seekers, and political connection-hunters. Mrs. Dunbar only having been to the play, and not to the Duchess's after,—

The Archdeacon addressing her, thus expressed some of the thoughts that were circulating through his mind.

"I am glad Edith has at length come to her senses, and made her appearance in the world."

"So am I, very glad indeed, poor child, for it is bad at her age to begin life with a great grief, and brood over it incessantly; I think she seemed to like the play, and I hope she enjoyed herself after at the Duchess of Diplomat's. I never saw her looking prettier, so I'm sure she was admired."

"Yes, but the worst of it is, she don't know how to make the most of herself."

"Little need of that," said the old lady innocently; "for at her age, and with her beauty, 'a bonny bride is soon busked'—as we say in Scotland."

"Tush! I don't mean *that*," rejoined Samuel Panmuir: "women are always thinking of dress. I meant, that with her appearance, and the *entre* into the best houses, which I have been able to give her, she may, at least she *ought*, to make a most brilliant match; which I fear she will not do, if she allows a set of nobodys to dangle about her."

"What you mean, Panmuir?" asked Mrs. Dunbar, looking up over her spectacles.

"I mean that, that Mr. Lancaster, who brought the Duchess's invitation into our box, seemed to hover round her for the rest of the evening to the exclusion of every one else."

"Well I'm sure I thought him an uncommonly nice young man, very handsome, and so well-bred too!—for there are few of his age now-a-days, and in this great town, would be as civil and attentive to an old body like me as he was, repeating every thing to me that I could not quite catch in the play."

The Archdeacon shrugged his shoulders, as much as to say, "there is no use in arguing with such unsophisticated folly!" and then added aloud, as he made a sudden pause in his perambulations—

"Another thing, too, I don't at all approve of the eternal books, notes, and bouquets, that keep coming from Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, for though I don't know a more rising man, and one more sure eventually to succeed in the world, yet, a girl with Edith's advantages, both natural and acquired, may fairly aspire to a ready-made position, and not have to toil up the hill with any trading politician."

"Oh! as for that Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, he may be, and no doubt is, very clever, and all that; but I'm sure Edith don't think about him, beyond his having been poor Donald's friend, and I know Alciphron Murray had not a good opinion of him, and *that* would go a great way with Edith."

"Fudge! what on earth should a man like Murray, never in the world, and always in the clouds, know about such a man as Ponsonby Ferrars; one of the most talented and rising men of the day, and who only lacks two things in *my* opinion, to make him a most eligible match for Edith; and those are, a dukedom, or at least a peerage, and a hundred thousand a year. Ah! I had had great hopes, that when that Duke of Liddesdale bought Glenfern, he being a young man, matters might have been arranged for Edith still to retain the place, with the addition of a ducal coronet; but he's worse than a will-o'-the-wisp, there is no coming up with him, for four times have I been to Glenfern within the last two years, and twice in the grouse season too, and all I can ever hear is that he was there for a few days last week. But I must say, he has improved the place wonderfully, for instead of the shepherds' huts scattered about the moor, he has built the prettiest Swiss chalets imaginable. And Amy Verner's, and all the houses in the village, are the most picturesque cluster of Elizabethan buildings you ever saw, and harmonize admirably with the old church. Well! well! it is a thousand pities that Edith—"

But what these multiplied causes for commiseration were, remained untold, for at that moment Edith made her appearance, looking much more like a thousand graces than a thousand pities. Having kissed her grandmother, then shaking hands with her cousin, she rang for the kettle and proceeded to make the tea; in doing so, the flame of the lamp beneath the kettle caught the lace at the end of her sleeve, and in trying to extinguish it, the little Venetian chain she wore round her neck got entangled with the silver chain of the kettle, so that she might have been seriously burnt had not Mrs. Dunbar started from her seat, and twisted her napkin round the flaming wrist.

"Take care, child!" cried she, as soon as the danger was over, "or we shall really think that you have made up for lost time last night, and have already fallen in love. I hope it's not with Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars?"

"My dear grandmamma," said Edith, in a half disclaiming, half reproachful tone,—at the same time blushing up to her temples—

"Because now," continued the old lady, as she put some more sugar candy into her coffee, "do you know that I like that other young man who came into our box last night much better; something so nice and amiable, and well-bred about him; besides, I hate carrotty whiskers! Never marry a man with fiery whiskers, my dear; for they are apt to have tempers to match."

"What a dear, funny, naughty granny you are," said Edith laughing, as she got up and kissed her; which was an admirable manœuvre, for hiding her face from the Archdeacon's scrutinizing gaze, which she felt was at that moment upon her, in all the fulness of its vacuity!

"Ahem! ahem!" said he, taking the pith out of a roll, in order that there might be something pithy about what he was going to say, "What did you think of 'First Love'?"

"Ah!" said Mrs. Dunbar shaking her head before Edith could reply, "it is only at *my* age people tell truly and honestly what they think of first love! at *hers* they never do."

"Because at mine," said Edith with one of her enchanting smiles, "at least as far as *I* am concerned—they have had no opportunity of judging: but with regard to the play, I thought it a pretty play enough, badly acted, and as for the hero! had I been Eva, I never would have married him."

"And why not? I'm sure he was a most devoted, passionate lover, and all that sort of thing," insisted the Archdeacon.

"Because I could never esteem a man who had so deliberately deceived me."

"Ta! ta! ta! all fair in love and war, you know?"

"Then I should ever be at war with love."

"Ha! ha! ha! well come, that is better than like most young ladies, being in love with war, and following the drum; and so committing partial suicide, by cutting themselves off in the flower of their youth, with a captain in a marching regiment, and country quarters! But talking of country quarters reminds me of the War Office; and you *must* go to Lady McToady's to-night, for now that you have been out, she will be quite offended if you don't attend her receptions punctually."

"If I must, I must!" said Edith, with a resigned sigh.

"I wonder if Mr. Pon—"

"Did you say more cream?" interrupted Edith, pushing it over to the old lady, whom she saw with nervous trepidation was again about to dance her favourite *Marionette*, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars; in order to prevent which, she added, "Do you know, grand-mamma, it struck me that I had seen that Mr. Lancaster's face somewhere before; and I have been thinking and thinking where it *could* have been; and now I know: don't you remember" (and here she sighed heavily), "four years ago, when you came to take me from Madame Beaucarmés, and we were at the Hôtel du Rhin, on the Place Vendôme, getting out of the carriage one day, I dropped my glove, and a gentleman who was passing at the time picked it up and gave it to me?"

"No, indeed, my dear, I don't; but I dare say you do; for I well remember when I was a girl, at a great ball at Dalkeith,

at the marriage of the *then* 'young Buccleugh,' dropping a rosebud out of my bosom, while dancing a minuet with young Lovat, and the McGregor picked it up, and shewed it me, seven and thirty years after, when I was a widow, but unlike the lassie in the song, I was 'o'er *auld* to marry then.'"

"Well," laughed Edith, "there was no such romance about my glove; but Mr. Lancaster mystified me very much, by saying that last night was not the first time he had seen me; and I now recollect that he was the person, who, passing by at the time, had the civility to stoop and pick up my glove."

"Humph! rather dangerous, my dear Edith, to become hand-in-glove with a man you pick up in the streets," deprecated the Archdeacon, shaking his own head, and breaking that of a third egg.

"But I have not become hand-in-glove with him; neither did I become acquainted with him in the street; unless, indeed, you use the word in the slang acceptation of the term; as all the young men call Diplomat House: '*The Street*;' and the duchess's *soirées*, of whatsoever description, whether dinners, concerts, or receptions, '*Downing Streets*.'"

"Oh, of course he's eligible, and all that sort of thing," rejoined Samuel Panmuir, "or you would not have met him there; only to oblige the duke, the duchess sometimes asks strange sort of people; I mean people not at all in her set, and that one may hear of but don't generally see; such as artists and printers, and those sort of people."

"Printers?"

"Well, authors, and newspaper people; it's all the same kind of thing."

"But I thought authors were rather sought after in society, and called lions: for instance, look at Mr. Benaraby, and Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, and—"

"Oh, *those* are men of a certain standing, who may be called amateur authors; they don't write in garrets for their bread, though they may write for their claret and their venison, or even

for their opera boxes ; but besides *they* have a certain political influence, and *that* is everything in this country."

"Well, but Mr. Carlo Dials? he has no political influence, and I believe he does—!"

"Yes, he has the press," again interrupted the Archdeacon; "besides, there are exceptions to every rule, and one argues from the *rule*, and not from the *exceptions*; moreover, *he* has had *luck*, and there is no system or science by which *that* can either be acquired or explained."

Edith was silent; and as the Archdeacon, at the commencement of this conversation, had done a very unusual thing, namely, alluded to the Duke of Diplomat, a thing seldom or never done in society, we shall take this opportunity of stating, that there actually *was* such a person; but he was almost a myth, being a model husband: that is, he was seldom heard of, and *never* seen. In fact, the poor man was always ill, which is a way some men have of giving their wives their widowhood by instalments, and like money paid in the same way, though it is not so advantageous as the sum total, still, in both instances, it evinces an effort to do what is right, and on that account, is acceptable.

The poor Duke of Diplomat, then, being a sort of *demi-mort*, it may be admissible to pass upon him the epitaphical panegyric of saying, that a more innocuous, self-sufficing, tractable, liberal, non-exacting, never-grumbling, anti-lord-and-masterish animal, of the genus husband, never existed; for live he did not, nor was it necessary that he should: for, as in some families the title and estates descend in the female line, so in others (though even more rarely than in the case of hereditary honours) all *marital* authority centres in the wives; and, as in the former instance, gives every privilege and immunity; with the solitary exception of sitting in the House of Lords; for which, however, absolute control over their own lords may be considered as some sort of compensation; so at least the Duchess of Diplomat amiably thought it, and therefore never insisted upon taking the oaths in the Upper House.

Breakfast being ended, the Archdeacon retired to his study, where he generally spent two or three hours in solemn seclusion ; reading the papers, and occasionally even such light literature, or profane works, as to have read openly—that is, in the dining, or drawing-room, might have compromised both his dignity and his divinity. Mrs. Dunbar having divers of those innumerable little potterings about, to which all old ladies are more or less addicted, and in which they are all unanimous in disliking to be followed, left Edith free to enjoy the solitude of her own room, and the crowd of her own thoughts, which was at once a luxury and a relief ; for, though she loved her grandmother sincerely, yet time had placed that wide icy gulf between them, which the warm, buoyant thoughts of youth seldom succeed in clearing, but generally fall in, and perish in the attempt. The love we feel for age is like that we lavish upon childhood—of a very protecting, generous, unselfish nature ; as in either case there can be no current reciprocity of thoughts and sentiments to equalize the compact. And what *did* Edith think of ? What does the night-wind think of when it whispers to the flowers ;—or the misty and lurid nebulæ, when it looks on the stars till it veils their light ?—or the rolling, rippling waves, when they murmur strange, world-old legends to the listening shells ? Ask the night-wind ; and a sigh shall be your answer. Ask the stars ; they will palpitate in light, but not reveal for whom or what they scintillate. Ask the shell ; nay, press its cold lips still closer to your ear, and you shall distinctly hear the echo of the murmuring wave,—but *not* the tale it told !

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION III.

"Thou shalt see greater abominations than these."

Ezek. viii. 15.

"O Lord, that seest from yon starry height,
Centred in one, the future and the past,
Fashioned in thine own image, see how fast
The world obscures in me what once was bright."

FRANCISCO ALDANA.

Translated by Longfellow.

DURING the four seasons that Edith had been in London, without going out until within the last five weeks (for that period had now elapsed since her *début* at the Duchess of Diplomat's), Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had made very good use of his time, as far as offering of books, flowers, and magazines went—which latter generally contained elaborate puffs of himself, or his works, or both; with still more elaborate hints of what a prize it would be for any woman to secure the affections of such a man; as from his writings (!) it was evident, notwithstanding the brilliancy and altitude of his intellectual achievements, that his heart was a well-spring of those gentler and purer domestic affections, which make of home a terrestrial paradise, like Horace's description of Baix—

"Nullus in orbe locus Bais
Præluet amornis——"

These offerings were, moreover, for the most part accompanied with voluminous notes, written in a close, cramped hand, and

containing a happy mixture of wit, gossip, philosophy, politics, ——— and sentiment, of which latter all the former were but the envelopes. Now, had all this been systematic, nothing could have been more scientific, but it was not : Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was merely playing with his uttermost skill such cards as he held in his hand ; but for that matter, nine times out of ten, CHANCE is the most subtle diplomatist possible ; and its combinations are often far more artistic than the most astute plans of human forethought. For instance, had Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had free access to Edith, in all probability he would never have made as much way in her *thoughts* as he had already done ; from being too precipitate in his attempts to make more. For the seed of *all* feelings, be they those of love or hatred, are first sown in the head, and germinate in the mind before they fructify and become passions in the heart ; and it is impossible not to think about a person who is constantly placing themselves allegorically before us in a series of nameless, but apropos, and therefore acceptable attentions. And, so far had Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars advanced into what he himself would have called "*the seat of war*," that he had succeeded in casting the full-length outline of his shadow across the still vacant arena of Edith's thoughts. Her existence up to the present time had been a very wide blank, and he had helped to inscribe upon it at least a something that had interested her imagination ; so that a day which brought no book, note, or flowers, from him, was to her a *dies non*, and few women are—but positively no girl is—insensible to fame, celebrity, notoriety, popularity, or whatever the real name of the Proteus REPUTATION be ! So indisputable is this *fact*, that were maids a river fish, Isaak Walton would unquestionably have recommended it as an infallible bait for their capture ; and Edith thought it was so good ! so kind ! of him, occupied, and more than occupied as he was, and with so much at once to excite and to satisfy his vanity in the world, yet to think of her, and to find time to minister to her wants, and endeavour to alleviate the dullness

of her obscure and isolated *existence*. Then to have *her* opinion appealed and deferred to by this man, to whom the world appealed and deferred!—there was a deep spell in this; for it is not that women have *more* vanity than men, but it is of a different kind: theirs being a vanity of the heart, which is a parasite of the affections—whereas, that of men is of the head, and of the fungi genus, of rapid growth, self-induced, and self-supporting; of enormous summit, and small foundation; and irrigated into rank luxuriance, by the very influences that would damp and blight other and more valuable productions. But most of all, there was in Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' letters (though always unanswered by her, save in the brief acknowledgment of a single line, or an equally brief message of verbal thanks) a sort of electric sympathy of thought, and opinion, which appeared to her almost supernatural, and were to her pent-up feelings, like refreshing showers to the parched and arid desert, after the empty pomposity of the Archdeacon, and the uncongenial *talkings* of Mrs. Dunbar, whose conversation, like that of most very old people, was chiefly retrospective and *réchauffée* of herself. And then came Edith's most critical crisis of all, which was her excuses to, and justification of herself, for thinking so much about this man; the final summing up being, that Alciphron Murray was prejudiced, and therefore must be wrong, and poor Donald right; or he never would have felt the friendship he had done for him—a friendship, by-the-bye, which Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had, as far as young Panmuir was concerned—and still more so, as regarded himself—greatly exaggerated. And now that she went into the world, and that they met almost daily and nightly, despite the many passages in his letters which might have led her to suppose, that it was only the opportunity he wanted to tell her that he loved her, so as not coarsely to obtrude *his* love upon *her* grief—still, though these opportunities now abounded, no word of the kind was ever uttered by him. Notwithstanding which, there was that tyrannous *espionnage* of look and manner, that left no glance or

movement of hers free ; that evoking of the mystic, and the occult, in the midst of the commonplace, which a dominant spirit can always exercise upon its selected vassal unobserved and unsuspected by all others. In short, in every crowd where they met, he traced, as it were, an atmospheric magic circle ; of which, while she herself was the centre, he was nevertheless the archetype. In thus haunting her, he had created in her mind an artificial want of his presence, which grew at length into a sort of antithetical morbidity ; for upon entering any room where he was not, and consequently where his cold pale eyes did not "compass her round," she felt at once a disappointment and a relief. Oh ! if there is a perilous or a pitiable position on earth, it is that of a young girl, just entering the world, who has neither mother, sister, nor any one near enough, or true enough, to let her heart strike before ; for the chronology of the affections, like that of kingdoms, is the record of events rather than of time ; and how often does one of these poor young hearts, when down, want winding up ; and when wound up, want regulating ; while for lack of such care, full many a mainspring has snapped, and the rigid hand of time pointed immovably and uselessly to *one long past fatal hour* ! Edith felt this want keenly ; but it is only an aggravation of misery to be fully sensible of an evil that we cannot remedy. In youth, all, or nearly all, our passions and feelings are to ourselves hieroglyphics, and it is not till the scroll of life is far unrolled, that we acquire sufficient knowledge to decipher them, and then, *cui bono* ? since by that time, they have all become equally a dead letter to us. In vain Edith studied and puzzled over these symbolical archives of her own mind, without being able to come to any solution. She did not love him, oh no ! she was sure she did not love him, therefore she wished she could either like him more, or think of him less, for with that freemasonry which all women possess in such matters, totally independent of the slightest admixture of vanity, she felt that Mr. Lancaster *did* really love her, though his manner was so quiet, so concen-

trated and so unecstatic, compared with Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' Hecla demeanour—for while his exterior was ice itself to the generality of persons, to *her* the volcano ever sent forth sufficient evidence of its raging within. Personally, it was impossible not to admire, esteem, and like Mr. Lancaster better, for in the first place he had nature's letter of recommendation—beauty, and next, there was about him that perfect absence, or rather that total abnegation of self, which has its origin in good feeling, and manifests itself in good breeding, that rare! moral magnet, which attracts all, and *retains*, as well as attracts, while Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars (she could neither deny nor extenuate the fact), was both imperious and ill-tempered, and consequently often exceedingly ill-bred, as all exacting people are; still, with this manifest superiority on the side of Mr. Lancaster, why did she so often wish that *he* had the talent, the prestige, the celebrity, in fact, of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, though on the other hand, he *might* have talents for aught she knew, although he had never displayed them in a voluminous correspondence like the former, or shone by monopolizing the whole conversation, for in her society he said little, whatever he might do in that of others. Yet never—and here again Mr. Lancaster had a decided and most flattering advantage over the clever man, had he known it—did Edith catch herself wishing Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars any of Mr. Lancaster's attributes; these feelings were inexplicable to herself, yet they were the very natural results, of the causes in which they had their origin.

Mr. Lancaster had had a solid and *universal* education, that is, *every* faculty, *beginning* with the moral ones, and extending to the intellectual, had been *equally* developed, and carefully trained, which had made of his character an harmonious whole, which did not indeed dazzle like a meteor, but gradually penetrated into the hearts of others, and vivified their esteem, like a fixed and steady luminary, as was the principle from which his every act emanated or by which they were controlled. Now Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, on the contrary, had received a purely

classical education, according to the monstrous, though long established system of our public schools and colleges, and (as has been truly remarked by a late eloquent divine*—"The present state of classical education cultivates the imagination a great deal too much, and other habits of mind a great deal too little, and trains up many young men in a style of elegant imbecility.") Alas! if the evil was even limited to the "elegant imbecility," it would be no great matter (that is, as long as the said young gentlemen were sufficiently well off to indulge in this elegant imbecility), but it is not; for in this system which totally excludes the cultivation of a single moral, or any other faculty *but* the intellectual ones, its produce (when grafted upon nullities) may indeed be elegant Imbeciles! but when its seeds are scattered amidst the deep furrows of strong passions and decided characters, its fruits must be, and are, unscrupulous villains and accomplished profligates. For after a young gentleman has for eighteen years assiduously and *exclusively* devoted all the energies of his mind to an analytic study of the intrigues of Jupiter, and the orgies of Olympus, without one sanctifying holy home, or counteracting moral influence, can it be expected that he should not at the termination of such studies think, and feel himself fully competent to "go and do likewise;" and beings trained in such a school are perfectly incapable of LOVE properly so called, whose sacred fire purifies, elevates, and sublimates, the most earthy natures, for all so trained know nothing of the true divinity, having graduated under the heathen Cupid, that Ignatius Loyola of Olympus, and having consequently no better worship to offer at his shrine, than the hollow and treacherous chicane of his own crooked code, and while this high state of cultivation of the ideal or intellectual, to the total neglect of the moral and the *real*, because the *eternal*, is sure to cause them to make victims, more or less, of all who come within their sphere, we question whether it is *even* a source of spurious hap-

* The Rev. Sidney Smith.

piness to themselves? and rather think not, being of Grimins' opinion, that "*le peu de bonheur dont nous pouvons jouir, ne vient—il pas bien plus de nos sentimens, que de nos idées? et tout sentiment qui ne peut se communiquer aux autres, fut—ce même la gloire, paraît bien triste, et bien froid.*" * And what in the whole arcana of our physiology is at once so insatiable, and so incommunicable, as intense egotism? which is sure to be the first and *sole* offspring of this *exclusive* union between the classical and the intellectual.

* The little happiness of which we are capable, do we not derive it rather from our feelings, than from ideas? and all feelings which cannot be communicated to others, were it even that of fame, or triumph, would be both tame and cold.

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION IV.

"There hath not failed one word of all his good promise."—1 *Kings*, viii. 56.

"Better is it to be of an humble spirit, with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud."—*Prov.* xvi. 18.

"For the commonest minds are full of thoughts that would do credit to the rarest."
—*Tupper's Proverbial Philosophy.*

It was between five and six o'clock of an evening in June,—the rain having fallen in torrents all the day, and the sun for the first time bursting out in great glory from amidst the black clouds, and flinging his *largesses* down indiscriminately upon the two rapid little muddy rivers that rolled on either side of Oxford Street, when a Brompton omnibus stopped at the corner of Dean Street, from which a thin, middle-aged, middle-sized, dark, and plain-featured woman alighted, dressed in those elaborate and full-blown weeds, which women in the middle classes so often take a long lease of, not so much from excessive grief for "the dear departed," as from excessive economy, in order to recover the interest of the large capital sunk in crape at the first starting; or it may be, when the wearer has no great amount of personal attractions, as in the present instance,—a sort of "giving notice" that there was ONE discriminating mortal who thought otherwise; though, alas! it is not to be supposed that *she* "e'er can look upon his like again!" and hence this terrible maelstrom of black crape, Paramatta, and gauffred muslin. The figure thus engulfed, and who was now alighting

from the omnibus, was slightly marked with the small pox, her face and forehead both red, and the forehead so high, that it looked as if its owner had treated her hair like a wig, and pushed it very far back, to cool the fire that was raging in her face; her eyes were dark, and dancing here, there, and everywhere at once, which enabled them to catch, with the dexterous rapidity of an Indian juggler, the numerous eyeballs they went in quest of, while she laboured under the illusion that the former were always in search of hers. Her nose was short, straight, and spikey, with an upper lip so long, that it looked like the model of a spout; her teeth had been good, and were firmly and decisively set in her head, but were now in mourning also; her figure was neat, and trim, as most very small figures are; and peeping out, like some neglected flower, from beneath all these weeds. She thought it irresistible. Indeed, she had an idea—or rather a *conviction*—that the very circumstance of wearing weeds, was a bait, a snare, a springe—in short, a concrete magnet, for attracting all the floating gallantry, and itinerant immorality extant; and it was astonishing the fierce struggles, and imaginary persecutions, she sustained on their account. And yet such was the tenacious affection of what she called “her widowed *art*, to the memory of poor dear *Mr.* (for she never omitted his title) Bousefield,” that she could not bear to leave them off, though the unconscious Bousefield had now slept quietly in Paddington churchyard for the last fourteen years. Neither was his paragon of a widow ever tired of expatiating upon his defunct virtues,—the panegyric generally concluding with—“Ah! poor dear Mr. Bousefield, hif I could *ave heat gold, e’d ave give* it to me,” though it must be confessed that these marital virtues were not so much cited for the idle purpose of “adorning a tale,” as for that of “pointing a moral,” which moral was—“what a wife *she* must have been to have insured such devotion!” And when she had to condole with less fortunate wives, which was daily and hourly, the formula of her sympathy invariably was,—

"Ah! Mrs. Tompkins, *I* who *ad* a good *usban*, and know what it is, *knows ow* to feel for *you*, with *your* blackguard—*blackguard* (with great emphasis) I call him, to use any *coman* in that way."

Mrs. Bousefield having performed the transit from Brompton to Oxford Street in perfect safety, with no rocks a-head, beyond on three occasions having thought it necessary to tell an elderly gentleman, opposite to her, who, with his umbrella between his knees, was on his return to the city, quietly ruminating after his last feed of "*The Times*," first, that "she would thank him to know his own from other people's, and keep his feet to himself:" whereupon he innocently expressed his belief of having all along been guilty of that monopoly. The second time, she was still more unjust, for a deep rut, which had occasioned a general *pêle-mêle* of all the passengers, she invidiously attributed to a singular pressure from without, of the elderly gentleman individually; while the third time, another rut having caused the point of his umbrella to slip, and spring forward of its own accord, and alight between those feet where the late Jedediah Bousefield had breathed out his youthful love, his widow hurled at the elderly gentleman the following piece of "useful and entertaining knowledge"—viz., "that *humber-hellers* was made for keeping *hoff* the rain, and not for poking of respectable *females* about in that *howdacious* sort of way; but it was *hawful* what lone women, and *hespecially* widders, had to put hup with."

"And to put *down* with, too, Ma'am, seemingly," said the proscribed elder, good-humouredly, as he handed after her a small kangaroo in a cage; "for I see this little animal is directed to the bird-stuffer's a few doors lower down."

"Oh! for *Eaven's* sake don't go for to give me none of your nasty hanimals," cried Mrs. Bousefield, as she scrambled up a new widow's cap, tied up in one of poor dear Mr. Bousefield's *çi devant* scarlet and yellow Indian silk pocket handkerchiefs, and one of those black embroidered, fold-up reticules, which ap-

pear, both as to size and form, a compromise between a carpenter's basket and a carpet bag, and, finally, a round basket tied over with white, thinnish paper, and round with a piece of Dutch matting, which she told the cad, as he took it from her hand while she was getting down, to "be *perticklar careful* with, as they *was* grapes for a lady *has was hill*;" after which she prepared to descend, not without first, however, *calling the attention* of a butcher who sat smoking on the top of the omnibus with his face turned the other way, by telling him to mind his own business, and not to look at *her*.

"All right, marm," said the man, flinging her one look over his shoulder; "y've no call to be *afeared*, for not being a peacock, you see, I *ha'n't* got no eyes in my tail;" which caused a laugh among the other occupants of the roof, and a parting diatribe from Mrs. Bousefield, about the "*howdacious impudence* of them fellers, one and all—only the *hold uns was* the worst;" which latter part of this speech she hurled back into the omnibus, with a look of virtuous indignation at the elderly gentleman's umbrella, he himself having his head turned the other way, looking out of the window. No sooner had she reached *terra firma*, collected all her parcels, bundles, and packages, and lifted up, not her voice, but her petticoats, preparatory to crossing the dyke, than the sudden apparition of an elderly and very benevolent-looking man, in deep mourning, and yet with more sorrow in his countenance than in his garments, who stood within the doorway of a shop at some little distance, in the act of hailing a Kensington omnibus, seemed completely to upset her,—not, indeed, *literally*, but figuratively; for, with the same desperation that those misguided mortals *who take* shower baths, pull the string, and overwhelm themselves in an *amateur* deluge, did the bereaved relict of Jedediah Bousefield pull suddenly down the Niagara of black crape that adorned the front of her bonnet. Now, what made this movement the more remarkable, was, that it was evidently occasioned, neither by a compassionate desire to shield the hail-

er of the Kensington omnibus from the artillery of her charms, nor by the laudable ambition of placing Bousefield's widow on the same beyond-suspicion's footing as Cæsar's wife ; but from a mingled paroxysm of fear and surprise, which, as she hurried down Dean Street, and crossed Soho Square, eventually turning into Wardour Street, found utterance in the following soliloquy :

" Well, I never ! who'd have ever ? And getting into a Kensington 'bus, too ! Surely he can't—*prays* he as, though ; and a good thing, too : for I for one am tired of such riff-raff, hugger-mugger doings. *Usban*, indeed,—*Blackguard* I call him ; and so I've a good mind to tell him pretty soon. But to think that there, if I ain't come all hover in one of them terrible eats ! quite enough to hupset my poor nerves. The goings on of that good-for-nothink old feller in the 'bus, without any more,—dear, dear. Well, I'd as soon ave hexpected to ave seen poor, dear Mr. Bousefield himself ; and the shock of *that* I'll leave any married ooman to judge, who as ad a usban ! buried for fourteen years, and never hexpected to see *him* no more, if he really *was* a usban ; for one half as calls themselves so don't 'have as sich ; pack of hobstroplus, howdacious, hover-bearing, gallavanting, good-for-nothink—*blackguards* ! I call 'em."

And here Mrs. Bousefield stopped to take breath, and to look about her, which was very proper ; for, if Greece is the classic soil of antiquity, Wardour Street is unquestionably that of antiquities, which the widow, however, somewhat profanely designated as a parcel of rubbishing old rag shops, as she looked up and down it, seemingly uncertain which way to bend her course ; indeed, she could not think, and so she said to herself, " What the *quality* could mean by coming to such a low-lived place to *buy*, even *she*, a poor *tradeswoman*, when in business" (the business had been a public-house in Holborn), " poor, dear Mr. Bousefield never let her have a second-hand thing in her house. Her bedsteads and chairs were all of the *newest*

and best *meeogany*; so were all the barrels at the bar. When, at Mr. Bousefield's death, she had parted with the *concern*, she had ended *sold* some plate to a Jew in that street, and that's how *she* came to know of such a place; but, as for *buying* a parcel of nasty, dirty, old, worm-eaten furniture, *she* should be afraid of its being full of Queen Elizabeth! the Spanish Armada! the Great Fire of London! and the Plague! and—catching them all. No; hers was all in a very *humble* way; but, thank goodness, it *was new*, clean, and tidy, and no carving but upon good, wholesome joints. "Drat the place! if I can remember whereabouts it was; but I think, indeed I'm sure, the name was Jacobs; because I remember his saying that the *goold* coin at the bottom of my punch ladles was a Jacobus; and my saying, has it was one of *his family*, then, I supposed, he ought to give more for it; and I can't say but he *be'aved* very *'andsome*, on the whole, *'specially* considering he was a Jew."

It will be perceived by the foregoing piece of lucid eloquence, that talking (like bleeding at the nose with some persons) was at once an infirmity with, and a relief to Mrs. Bousefield; talk she *must*—of course she preferred an audience—what orator does not? but still hers was a self-sufficing gift, and in default of other listeners, she could speechify for hours to herself, without a dissentient voice; which is, perhaps, the chief advantage of that peculiar species of elocution. There was one remarkable feature in her "Romance of History," which was, that not one of the events chronicled in our national archives (by some strange, mysterious process, only known to herself) ever preceded or went beyond the Elizabethan era. For, although it is true she had a due horror of Henry the Eighth (or old Harry, as she very appropriately called him), and his little favourite pastime of cutting off his wives' heads, yet by some unaccountable hocus-pocus, even these rolled from the scaffold, accompanied by Queen Elizabeth on a high-trotting horse going in state to Tilbury Fort! And also, more recent

occurrences—to which the almanack and Universal Gazetteer officiated as parish registers, such as the French Revolution, and the Battle of Trafalgar, she contrived to antedate into her favourite reign, confounding the Revolution with the St. Bartholomew! and speaking with horror of “the time, when all the people *was* treated so *barbarous* in France, and butchered like bellwethers at the *French Bartlemy fair! in Queen Elizabeth's time*. While the battle figured as “*them two squirts in Trafalgar Square, which was brought by Lord Nelson, with tobacco pipes, from Americkey, which was afterwards beheaded by Queen Elizabeth for it! though some does say it was because she was more intimate with him than she should be.*” There was also another romance attending her love, which Bousefield himself had ignored; and which she never alluded to, but on great emergencies—such as when her abstract widowhood, though of fourteen years' accumulation! failed to excite all the lachrymose sympathy which she deemed it entitled to;—then, applying her handkerchief to the corner of either eye, would she beg her auditory, singular or plural as the case might be, to think what *her* feelings *was*, when she read the *births*, marriages, and deaths, in the papers. *She* who had a 'usban, and six dear *hinfants* swallowed *hup* by the grave, without a victory and without a sting! Now, not one of her most intimate acquaintance, or even “*the oldest inhabitant*” of Holborn (that scene of her public glory, and her domestic bliss), could, after the most indefatigable research amid the nooks and corners of their memory, recall a single symptom of these *six dear hinfants*—this half dozen Thanes of Bousefield, that were to have been—beyond, indeed, some token caps and frocks which she, who was to have been the mother of their intended wearers, kept as the insignia of her order, and displayed only on collar days, namely, at those births, deaths, and marriages at which she was called on personally to assist. All common people are communicative, giving you not only their antecedents at first sight, but also every why and wherefore of their

proceedings ; but Mrs. Bousefield was even more so than her peers ; if purchasing provisions, her revelations turned upon her general health, and particular aliments, and she analytically described the effects of various condiments to the divers vendors, in a gratuitous essay which might have made a sensation in "The Lancet," had the printer been cautioned not to tamper with the original diction. Neither could she buy a yard of tape, without fancying the counter a confessional, and telling the shop-woman, or even the shop-man, the identical flannel petticoat whose epileptic tendencies it was destined to obviate. But in "*poor dear Mr. Bousefield's time*," her candour was pushed even to a far greater extent, for no paper of needles ever found its way from Whitechapel into her white dimity pocket, without her favouring its retailer with the most minute and elaborate details of the particular garment of "Mr. Bousefield's" they were intended to repair ; and even the exact size, form, and locality of the fracture. And as for buttons !—if Bousefield had not had a soul above buttons, his very ghost must have succumbed under them, as his relict's constant wish was, that she had but a guinea for every one that she had sewn on. Yet as she advanced in life (if her charming sex can ever be said to do so, however they may advance in the world), she imparted her own immediate affairs less, and devoted herself more exclusively to disseminating those of others : though having commenced her career as a lady's maid, she was wont to observe, that she "*hoped she might call herself a confidential person* ;" so that, like the countryman who agreed to shelter the fox, in the fable, though she would clearly *point out* the lurking place of a secret, she never *told* the secret itself ;—"least said, soonest mended," being *one* of the mottoes of the family arms appertaining to the "*six dear infants*."

At length, being completely lost in the maze of her own reminiscences, she did at last what she should have done at first, and stopping a woman, said :

"Please 'um, could you be so good as to tell me if a broker

of the name of Jacobs lives somewhere hereabouts? for my memory is by no means as good as it used to be; for when one has buried a *good 'usban'*, as mine was in *hevery respect'*, and six dear *hinfants*, you may suppose, 'um, though I'm not one to make much of a little, but very different from *that!* that I've seen a deal of trouble."

The woman stared at her; and without in the least appearing to feel this fugitive monody upon the defunct Mr. Bousefield and the *six dear hinfants*, any more than if she had been the tombstone of the former, and the very apocryphal cradle of the latter; with almost legal acumen confined herself to what she considered the only important point of the case, by informing her interrogator that she had passed the shop; as Mr. Jacobs lived five doors lower down on the left hand side.

Arrived at length at the door, it was not to be expected that she could turn the handle and walk in, without a great flutter, or, as she herself called it, fluster of spirits—and *coming all over in one of them terrible heats!* at the recollection of the punch ladles, tea, table-spoons, and other elegancies appertaining to the "Fox and Fiddle," when that establishment had been in its glory in "poor dear Mr. Bousefield's time." But at length, she made a desperate effort over herself—though, as she said afterwards in recounting her sensations, any one might have knocked her down with a feather; and, considering the number of ladies of Mrs. Bousefield's class, always ready to be knocked down in the same way, it is fortunate for them that this theoretical species of downy pugilism forms no practical portion of "the noble science of self-defence"—and with this great effort she opened the door and tottered in; but, perceiving by the light of the evening sun which was now streaming through a painted glass window in the back shop, that there were *two* men's hats for her to encounter—reckless of Queen Elizabeth, the Spanish Armada, Great Fire of London, or even the Plague!—she sat down in a thoroughly uncomfortable, elaborately carved high-backed arm-chair; and from thence

enunciated such a series of vigorous OH! OH!! OH's!!! which were meant for hysterical sobs—that, being in a curiosity shop, any one would have supposed she had sat upon a porcupine by mistake; and, indeed, the remains of a harrow, found in the Campagna of Rome, having that morning come in, Mr. Jacobs from Mrs. Bousefield's ejaculations feared she might have inadvertently misapplied that useful, and in this instance classical agricultural implement, whereupon he called out to one of his sons who was polishing a marquetry cabinet in an inner work-room beyond the back shop—

"Goodness! Benjamin, I hope you haven't left that piece of the Roman harrow about on any of the chairs?"

"No, sir, that harrow is in here."

"Dear me, then, I hope the lady has not sat upon your Venice glasses, Mr. Murray!" said Jacobs, advancing towards the widow to discover the cause of her groans; but at the name of Murray, the flood-gates of black crape were opened, and it again fell in torrents over her face.

"It's *nothing*, sir, *hall ill* soon be *hover*!" gasped Mrs. Bousefield in an under tone to Jacobs; "but hevrey one '*as* their feelings, and there *is* times and places where one *his* more susceptibler than *hothers*."

This speech instead of allaying, only revived Mr. Jacobs' fears, and he anxiously expressed a hope that there had been no glassés, or other inappropriate appendages, in the chair?"

"Oh, no, there's nothink in the chair, it's the '*ardest* as hever I sat upon; but, I believe, at the latter hend of Queen Elizabeth's time, they was accustomed to '*ard* ships," murmured Mrs. Bousefield in the same under tone; adding, "but pray attend to the gentleman as you was serving when I come in, for I can wait, and, indeed, should be glad to recover the flustering and '*arrowing hup* of my feelings a little."

Not only reassured by these words that Mrs. Bousefield had sustained no external injury, but from the *historical* allusion contained in the beginning of them,—having a confused idea

that the bale of black crape before him had cast its shadow on his threshold before; and like the cholera, influenza, scarlatina, or any other epidemic, was not easily got rid of—he turned to his previous customer, and said—

“Then the glasses I am to send to your lodgings in Bury Street, sir?”

“Yes, if you please; and the picture of Jeremy Taylor, already packed for going into the country, directed to the Rev. Hobart Wilmot, at Colonel Chipchase’s, No. —, Palace Gardens, Kensington.”

At these words the arm of the black sea in the Elizabethan chair began to agitate the large thick white linen pocket handkerchief it held in its hand, so violently, as a substitute for a fan, that from the manner in which she sank back (as far as the rigid perpendicularity of the chair would allow of), it appeared to fell her down like a whole forest of feathers; and as soon as the last speaker had quitted the shop, up flew the black crape fall, high in mid-air like a water spout, as turning sharply to Jacobs, she said—

“Pray did you not call that ’ere gent as has just left the shop, Mr. Murray?”

“Yes; that is his name.”

“You’ll *hexcuse* me—for I don’t *hask hout* of mere *curiosity*; but *his* is name *Halciphron* Murray?”

“Yes.”

“*Hand* didn’t I ’ear him a telling you to send a picter of Jeremy Diddler, I think he said, to the Reverend Hobart Wilmot? Now, pray, is Mr. Wilmot in town?”

“I suppose so,” said Jacobs; “or the picture would not have been ordered to be sent there to him.”

“And is it a ’ouse of his *hown*; that is a ’ouse as he have ’ired; for I know he has no town ’ouse?”

“I really don’t know; but I rather think not, as I understood Mr. Murray he was on a visit to Colonel Chipchase.”

For a few seconds the widow’s thoughts appeared to be

buried in the silent tomb with "Mr. Bousefield and the six dear hinfants;" but at the expiration of that time, she exclaimed, pulling herself up out of the chair, as it were by the lever of a great sigh!

"Well! how things does come about to be sure!"

And then rummaging in the depths of one of her capacious pockets, she fished up a very small, green velvet-case, or *etui*, rolled in silver paper, which case contained a large heart-shaped brilliant ring, of mediæval setting and workmanship, surmounted by a true lover's knot of rubies and diamonds.

"Now, *p'raps* you may not recall the circumstance, Mr. Jacobs," said she, still withholding the ring from his hand, which was outstretched to receive it; "but it is not the first time as you *hand* I 'ave 'ad dealings together."

"It struck me I *had* seen you before, ma'am; but I cannot exactly remember upon what occasion."

"Ha! no doubt, I'm terrible *haltered* since then, *hanguish* tells upon the stoutest 'arts, and the 'ighest *sperits*; and when one comes to 'ave a good 'usband, six dear hinfants, and *hall* one's spoons swallowed up by the silent grave without a sting, and without a victory! I *hask* what do you suppose *his* left of a ooman?"

Jacobs supposed the remaining fragment was her tongue, but he did not say so; he merely replied in the universal language of a shrug, which, like a diplomatic document, means anything, everything, or nothing: as different occasions, or contingencies may require.

"Yes, the grave 'ad poor dear Mr. Bousefield, and—you—*you* Mr. Jacobs 'ad my spoons!" and the convulsive sobs that accompanied this announcement would more than have filled the four punch ladles which formerly had graced the "Fox and Fiddle."

"Spoons! were they apostle spoons, or modern ones?"

"Oh, modern, *hand* the *very best*; for poor dear Mr. Bousefield my 'usband, never let me 'ave anything but the newest

hand the best ; (no offence to the *harticles* you deal *hin* Mr. Jacobs, which I know *his* run *haster* by the quality *has* great *curiosities*) *hand* *hall* *hour* plate was the fiddle pattern, *hon* account of *hour* *ouse* being called 'The Fox and Fiddle,'—*hexcept* four old punch ladles with *gould* coins set in them, which Old Lady Coddlecat left poor Mr. Bousefield, who'd been her ladyship's butler for years ; and two of the *gould* coins you said was Jacobuses, *hand* the *hother* two I think you called *hangels*—I spose on account of *hall* the *sperits* they '*ad* ladled *hout*."

"Oh ! I think I remember, it was somewhere between thirteen and fourteen years ago ; was it not ?"

"Just fourteen years and three weeks, come the thirteenth of next month," panted Mrs. Bousefield, getting up her steam for another fit of hysterics, which Jacobs perceiving, said hastily, in great alarm—

"Well, but what can I have the pleasure of doing for you now, ma'am ?"

"It *his* a little matter of business that *his* not mine, Mr. Jacobs, though I do *ope* I may call myself a *conferdential* person, for maid, wife, and widow, I've known the *family* these thirty years—indeed, I was Miss Florence's *mar's* maid—Miss Florence, I can't get *hout* of the way of calling of her, just *has* she still calls me Barlow, which was my maiden name ; though she 'ave now got three childzen, poor dear, more's the pity ! *hand* I do pity the poor *hin*fants from my '*art*', *has* *hall* children who *has* no reg'lar father as you may say, but one *has* comes *hon*ly on a job like, *hoff* and *hon*, *his* to be pitied ; and I who '*ad* a good '*usban*', a real one *hand* no sham ! one who would have give me *gould* to *heat* hif I could have heat it,—knows how to feel for them as—well, well, there *his* secrets *hin* every *family*, more hespecially among gentlefolks ; *hand* I do assure *you*, Mr. Jacobs, I should be the last person *hin* the world to say what *his*, *hor* what *hisn't*, but *hoften* when the tongue is silentest, the '*art*' is '*eaviest*' ; *hand* when I see a beautiful young lady wasting away, a dying by *hinches*, *has* the saying *his*, that should be so

very different, stuck hup in a cottage between four walls, hin a back lane between Kensington and Brompton (the most disreputablest place I *call it*, among a pack of hopera singers, and kept mistresses—good for nothink hussies, flaunting in wives' and children's bread), and going by the name of Mrs. 'Enry, which I don't consider no name at all; hand selling of her things one hafter *an* other, poor dear, to find shoes and clothes for her poor dear hinfants, while her 'usban, as he calls himself,—BLACKGUARD! I call him—drives the finest carriages and 'osses, hand with his rings, chains, studs, and jewelry, looks for hall the world like the trays of Hunt and Roskill's shop, hall hemptied hout *permiscus* hover one of Moses and Son's wax figures. Oh! it's hinfamous, scandalous, hand *haggravating* to a degree, hand though I *say nothing*, for prudence his the *fast dooty* of a confederal servant, yet I could say a great deal, honly what's nobody's business his heverybody's business; hand words hoften makes breaches that paving stones can't stop, as poor dear Mr. Bousefield used to say, who'd been the Dowager Countess of Coddlecat's confederal man for years, hand conserquently knew pretty well everything has was not fit to be told, hand I 'ope I shall halways do the same."

Jacobs having that morning read with one of his children, the fable of "The Oak and the Reed," prudently imitated the wise course of the latter, and bowed his head, till this verbal hurricane had subsided, when he again mildly inquired what he could have the pleasure of doing for Mrs. Bousefield, on the present occasion. Whereupon, at this "second time of asking," she wiped her eyes with the aforesaid capacious handkerchief, which, in these days of commercial associations, might have served as the general lachrymary of a joint stock widow's company. After which, having first announced that she had "again come all hover in one of them *tremenjus*! heats," which was no wonder, considering the race her tongue had ran,—she opened the little green-velvet case containing the ring, and said—

"It *his* this 'ere ring Mr. Jacobs, which poor Miss Florence—leastways Mrs. 'Enry, wishes, or very far from *that*, she don't wish it, poor thing, cause the ring belonged to her great, great, great granmar, which was given to a *haunt* of hers by Queen Elizabeth to give to the *Hurl* of *Hessez* to bribe him to be be-headed, hand 'aving been in the family so long, she would rather do anythink than part with it, but she wants fifty guineas, hand has nothink helse worth so much."

Jacobs, who had been examining the ring through a magnifying glass, and who, from Mrs. Bousefield's tirade, had gathered quite enough to convince him that in the midst of this rigmarole was wedged one of those myriads of inedited miseries, with which the streets, thoroughfares, courts, alleys, and by-lanes of every great city are literally paved, quietly gave her back the ring, saying—

"This ring is worth considerably more than fifty guineas, therefore it would be a pity she should part with it for that, or indeed any other sum, since as you say, it's an heir-loom, and at all events it is of very rare and curious workmanship, and great intrinsic value."

"But *my* lady will be so terrible disappointed, you see, Mr. Jacobs, hif I return without the money; hindeed, I may tell you in conference, which hof course is honly between our two selves, that his, you and me, Mr. Jacobs—the laundress hand grocer his both howed a 'eavy bill, which she promised to settle to-morrow; and tradespeople—has you well know, being in business, hand I know, aving *ben* a tradeswoman myself—gets hobstropolis, hand often hinsolent, *hif* at least a part 'hof their bills his not *heridicated*."

"I did not mean that the lady should go without the money; but I thought she might have something which she would be less reluctant to part with."

"She says not, hand hindeed I'm afear'd hit's only too true; for we've been at this work now for a whole year. Oh! I've no patience with that 'usban of hers—'usban, indeed, BLACK-

GUARD! I call him; hand I'm so tired of seeing half her beautiful trinkets go to them 'orrid common pawnbrokers, who gives nothink for anythink, for I do *bleeve* hif one was to bring them the *cure-in-your* (!) that 'ere great big diamond has was under a glass case like Van Butchel's wife, hat the Great Exhibition, them fellers would hactually 'ave thé face to tell you, that it was of no *vally* hon haccount hof hit's size, so I ad oped, as I should 'ave *bin* hable to ave done business with you Mr. Jacobs, and *heridicated away* (!) this here tiresome laundress and grocer to-morrow."

"Well, I hope you will," said Jacobs, taking up his hat and putting it on; "and if you will allow me to accompany you back to Mrs. Henry's house, I have no doubt but I shall be able to find something for which I can give her the sum she wants, without depriving her of that ring. Ben," added he, calling out to his son in the inner work-room, as he unlocked a high office desk in the front shop, and taking a large black leather pocket-book from it, put the latter into the side-pocket of his coat. "Ben, I'm going out, and I shall be back in a couple of hours; but if anything should detain me longer, tell your mother not to wait supper for me."

"I'm sure, sir, you hare *hextremely* kind, hand I *railly* feel more than I can *hexpress*," said Mrs. Bousefield, with one of her most captivating curtses—but not without a secret suspicion, that it was her *beaux yeux*, that were leading the bewitched broker all the way to Brompton at that late hour; but all she said *even* to herself, was—"Well, I'm sure ladies hie very fortunate, when they 'ave prudent, elever, confederal people about them, who knows 'ow to manage their affairs for 'em, which they never do themselves, poor things—and 'ow should they?"

On quitting the shop, Mr. Jacobs did *not* offer his arm to the widow; but *this* she attributed to prudential motives; for as she remarked to herself (from whom it will be perceived she had no concealments,)—"Hof course Jews' wives 'ave their

feelings like *hother* women, even hif they was Jewesses; and therefore, for her part, she was very glad that Mr. Jacobs behaved so *prudent*, for *she* should be the *last* to wish to cause *hany* honpleasantness betwixt man hand wife." At the end of the street they stopped a Knightsbridge omnibus, into which Jacobs (doubtless, in a continuation of the prudential vein she had ascribed to him), allowed Mrs. Bousefield to get, without any assistance from him; neither did she on her side, appear to entertain the same injurious suspicions of him that she had of the elderly gentleman with the divining rod of an umbrella,—and yet Jacobs being a dealer and *connoisseur* both in antiquities and curiosities, any dispassionate judge might, and in all probability would have supposed, that she ran far greater risks of capture from him than from the other; however, as if to give him some idea of what was expected from elderly gentlemen, travelling with widows and "*unprotected females*," in omnibuses, she roused him from his decorous stupefaction, by narrating to him, with a series of illustrations that would not have discredited Cruikshank, all the perils and dangers she had incurred during her journey to Wardour Street; concluding with this remarkable aphorism of the late Mr. Bousefield.

"But Mr. Jacobs, I *do* hassure *you*, sir, since I've been a lone 'ooman, without a 'usban's purtection, I hoften hand hoften think of poor dear Mr. Bousefield's words, '*Susanner*,' says he, 'whenever you gets into a bus, always put a basket hor a parcel hof each side on you, so as to let hall the squeegees come hon to *them*; hand *thof* *you* may be a little the worse from *their* bruises, hat hall events' he says—'*Susanner*,' says he, '*hother*s wont be none the better, hif so be has they was to turn theirselves into perfect lemon squeegeers."

"Very true indeed, ma'am," rejoined Jacobs, almost with a laugh; and then relapsing into silence as before, Mrs. Bousefield had ample leisure (the other occupants of the omnibus being only three damp school boys and a Skye terrier, all eyes and mud), to deliberate whether in the event of anything hap-

pening to Mrs. Jacobs, she *could* sell herself to a Jew, and put up with the dulness of Wardour Street, "and all *them* hold lumbering dust-traps of *curositites*," after the gaiety, bustle, and brilliancy of the "Fox and Fiddle," and the tumultuous rushings, crushing, drivings, and strivings of Holborn; and at length having come to the conclusion, that she was *not* so young "*hand* so *hactive*, nor so full of *sperits*" as she had been in the days of Bousefield, and as there was no likelihood of her "*aving* hany more dear *hinfants*, who of course she should like brought *hup* as Christians," she thought, though a Jew, he was an *uncommon* nice man; and would know what was due to a "*female*" under hall circumstances," and therefore, that she couldn't do better, though she might do worse; "but *lawr!* them Jewesses was as tough as Turks, hand lived hon to the most hunaccountablest *hages*, like the people in the Bible;" and this thought being a poser,—the omnibus all unconsciously keeping the unities, came to a dead stop at the corner of the Fulham Road; whereupon, Mrs. Bousefield, putting her head out of the window, requested the coachman to back a little, and set her down "*hat the Bell and 'Orns*." Upon alighting, she told Jacobs that in taking the turn leading to Old Brompton, they should have to walk about a mile to get to Magnolia Lodge, where Mrs. Henry lived; and he then perceiving the innumerable packages with which she was laden, stretched out his hand, and offered to disencumber her of the yellow and red silk handkerchief containing the widow's cap, but she would not relinquish that highly starched golgotha, in which she still put up public sighs for "poor dear Mr. Bousefield;" therefore she resigned into his custody the basket of grapes instead; remarking with a sigh, as she drew the red and yellow kerchief and its contents closer to her—"for *has* the Bible says, Mr. Jacobs, 'you can't get grapes from thorns,'—and *these is my thorns!* so you may take the grapes," a distribution of wealth, which her companion—Jew that he was—appeared infinitely to prefer, after which arrangement they walked on at a brisk

pace, Mrs. Bousefield, as usual, doing all the talking, which, somehow or other, like the getting up of her caps and collars, never was "*done to her liking*," unless she *did* do it herself. A twenty minutes' walk having brought them to a green lane, nearly opposite Drayton Place, they turned down it, and stopped at an enclosed house, which was approached by two large wooden carriage gates. Having rang the bell, which returned a hollow and lugubrious sound, Mrs. Bousefield naturally concluding that Jacobs must be blind, from the little, or more properly speaking from the non-effect, her attractions had had upon him—kindly informed him that it was almost dark; a remark to which he having given a confirmative reply, she again rang, expressing a suspicion that the inmates were all either dead or asleep.

At length a smaller gate, within one of the panels of the larger ones, was opened by a sort of gardener's boy, with a watering-pot slung over his right arm, and his flat, torn straw hat very much slouched over his eyes, whom the widow apostrophised as follows,—

"Why, laws, Joe! whatever hare you hall hat, to keep us so long a ringing here by howl-light hat the gate?"

"I wur along with father in the fur field, giving the calf his supper, and didn't hear the bell till just now," responded Joe.

"Giving the calf its supper! I suspect it was a two-legged calf you were cramming, as usual; for I'm sure I'd rather have the seven plagues of Hgypt to do with' hany day, than one boy! hand less plague too; for, has poor dear Mr. Bousefield used to say, when he had two pages hunder him hat the Dowager Countess of Coddlecat's and hall her ladyship's potecary's bills to pay,—'Boys hand blisters his a source hof *con*-tinual herritation!' But where hon hearth his Margaret, that she could not hopen the gate; or Marlow?"

"They are both out; there haint nobody in but father and I," replied Joe.

"What! hand left missus hall halone with them three infants!" almost screamed Mrs. Bousefield.

"You'll *hexcuse me*, Mr. Jacobs," said she, turning back, and stopping one moment as she hurried across the lawn, "but I must see to *my* lady, who them good-for-nothink servants, the moment my back was turned, has left quite alone, hand she so hill! Just foller me, please, hand I'll show you hinto the dining-room, while I see hafter Mrs. 'Enry, hand tell her has you've tootk the trouble to come hand speak to her about that 'ere ring."

Jacobs obeyed, begging Mrs. Bousefield would not hurry herself, as he could wait, at least for half-an-hour.

Magnolia Lodge took its name from two large magnolia trees, growing in almost southern luxuriance on the lawn, and overshadowing, with their foliage, while they overpowered with their perfume, the dining and drawing-room of the cottage, which were opposite to each other, the hall, or vestibule, dividing them. The house was only two stories high, and flat roofed, in the Italian style, but being a double house there were six rooms on each floor, beside the offices, with coach-house and stabling at the back, which had a sinecure, except when Mr. Henry's cab, brougham, or saddle-horses occupied them, during those rare times when he passed a day or two at Magnolia Lodge, which was so well enclosed, and from which, being in the angle of a lane, the road was so completely shut out, that once within it, any one might have fancied themselves a hundred miles from London.

Having ushered Jacobs into the dining-room, drawn up the blind, and placed a chair for him with considerable fussiness—for common people cannot stir a cup of tea, or pour out a glass of water, without doing it in a fussy and supererogatory manner, which they have an erroneous idea enhances their services—she at length closed the door upon him, and crossed the hall to the drawing-room. The last dark, crimson rays of the setting sun, bordered as they now were with the violet hues of a

summer's night, were darting their expiring and shadowy light through the room and through the trellis of a vine that shaded a back window at the further end of it. On a sofa, half reclining, and propped up with pillows, was the fragile and attenuated form of a young and very beautiful woman, around whom, notwithstanding the fatal ravages consumption had evidently made, and that she was also

"Begirt with growing infancy,"

there still lingered the soft and willowy outlines of girlhood. On her lap slept an infant of not more than five weeks old, whose calm, scarcely breathing slumbers she watched, as only mothers *can* watch, as if the weight of love—and it might be of sorrow—in her own eyes, pressed down the baby's lids and sealed the sleep within them; at her feet sat a little girl, about four years old, also asleep, with her face half hidden against her mother's knee, while her tendril-like chestnut curls fell in rich profusion over her ivory forehead and shoulders; and at some distance from her on the floor, lay pillowed, *à la Van Amburgh*, with his head resting on that of a large brown Mount St. Bernard dog, and his arms round the animal's neck, a fat, chubby boy, about five, with crisp, curling brown hair, and long lashes that swept his cheeks, like lengthening evening shadows, who had evidently worried himself and his noble companion to sleep.

"Oh! Barlow, how long you have been," said a soft, low voice from the sofa, as Mrs. Bousefield made her *entrée*; "and Margaret and Marlow have both gone out, which is very wrong of them; and there was no one to put the children to bed; and Henry has been frightening me to death, thrusting his hands into Alp's mouth, till I really thought the poor dog, in self-defence, would bite him."

Now, though Mrs. Bousefield was always ready, not only to join, but to exceed her mistress in any animadversions she might utter, touching the other servants, yet, from the long

habit engendered at "The Fox and Fiddle" of arrogating to herself a sort of pope-like infallibility, she never could admit that error and her own individual self were compatible; but the more palpable her fault appeared to the eyes of others, the more she bore their censures, "more in sorrow than in anger," immediately taking her stand as a martyr, and doling out every word of her defence as slowly as possible, with a sort of sledge-hammer emphasis, so as that the iron might enter into the soul of her accuser; and finally coming out strong in the injured innocence line, with a few, silent, victim (though invisible) tears, which, as the earth absorbs the dew, were always imbibed by the large pocket-handkerchief, at sight of which misery-flag, her adversary was sure to strike his or hers and sue for pardon, rather than risk any further *scenas* from Mrs. Bousefield's tragic muse. No sooner, therefore, had her mistress ventured to hint at the length of her stay, than, suddenly pausing in the middle of the room, and between every word, she uttered the following piece of withering endurance—"and not wishing to reproach anybody"—in the tone of a saint, at least as such tones are simulated in conventicles, and with the look of a St. Catherine having the omnibus wheel, as that of her martyrdom, in her mind's eye.

"Well, I ad oped, Miss Florence—least ways Mrs. 'Enry—that hafter the faithful services you've ad from me for years, hand your mar before you, that you knowd me better then for to think—let alone so lightly to haccuse me of staying long hout, when I knew has you was hill hat home. I did, hit his true, make a little delay hat Catleugh's, a chusing hon you some *otouse* grapes, a thinking as you would like em; but praps I was wrong so to do, we often his *wen* we does for the best"—(and here the handkerchief caressed the corner of either eye),—"but hit's live hand learn, hand I shall know better hanother time."

"I'm sure, Barlow, I'm very much obliged to you for the grapes, and it was very kind of you to think of them," interrupted her mistress.

"No, you haint, Miss Florence," broke in Mrs. Bousefield, with an accelerated sense of injury; "and there haint no occasions to be obliged to me; I consider when one does their dooty, one as the happroval hof one's own art, and that is quite sufficient; but ladies don't go in 'buses, hand therefore hasn't no idear what a lone ooman 'as to put up with—specially a widder—though *I* don't consider him *no* husband, yet you *ave* the name of one, hand heven *that* his hof use hin purtecting a ooman; *similar, the same*, as them notices stuck hup hin grounds, to tell people that hif so be as they hare found trespassing, they will be *persecuted* to the huttermost rigour hof the law; but just has a plate of *yaller* soap hand brown sugar, hin a back staircase winder, hattracts the wasps and bluebottles, I do verily believe, weeds hand a widder's cap brings hall the fellers a-buzzing about you; and the hold uns, like the bluebottles, his hout-hand-hout the worst; hand hof hall the how-dacious, imperent, good-for-nothink hold Don Jupiters, with his humbreller!—but no matter, hall that hamounted to nothink—but who hever do you think I sawr, hon getting hout hof the 'bus, hin Hoxford Street?"

"Not the ghost of poor Mr. Bousefield, I hope?" said the mistress, with a faint smile.

"Oh, no; Mr. Bousefield knows better than for to go about frightening of females, hin that way; hand, halways aving ad the abit hof staying a long time hin hall his places, I'm sure he'll continue to do the same now. No; it was no ghost, but real flesh hand blood; hand you might ave knocked me down with a feather, when I caught sight on him."

"Why, who could it be, Barlow?"

"Ah! who indeed; why, your *par*, Mr. Wilmot, himself."

A faint scream escaped the young woman, who buried her face on the arm of the sofa, and burst into a passionate flood of tears. The noise woke the little sleepers, all but the infant; and Alp, at the same time giving himself a rousing shake, and thinking it necessary to inquire into the cause of the commo-

tion, gave one of those deep-toned, sonorous barks, peculiar to his race. The little girl got upon a footstool, and her arms were instantly round her mother's neck, while Master Henry seized her arm, and vociferously inquired what was the matter, and whether his papa had been there? adding, with more truth than filial affection—

"I hate papa, he always makes oo cry whenever he tomes."

Mrs. Bousefield having briefly chastised Master Henry, and flung him this little moral axiom *en passant*—"Master Eney, my dear, it haint no business hof yours to ate your par; you should leave that to hother people, hand there's *plenty* of people to do hit." She turned to his mother and said: "Now, pray, my dear Miss Florence, don't take hon so; depend upon hit, hall things his for the best; hand, hof course, hit's no business hof mine, being but a very umble hindividual—has hall conferdential servants his—but hif so be has you would be said by me, you'd go hat once to your par, hand hown hall to him—pars are not like 'usbans, *they* can forgive; a child his halways a child, though a wife haint halways a wife, has *you*, poor dear, knows to your sorrer—hang! his hold haunt's money, say I. Would hany man, has deserved the name of a man hand a usban, keep his wife hunder a cloud hin this way, hand his marriage never howned hall these years, for hany hold ooman's money? Hif *my* usban was hashamed of *me*, I'd be hashamed of *him*, hand so I'd pretty soon let him, hand hall the rest of the world, know—"

"Flo, love," said the poor young mother, making a great effort over herself, "take your brother, and go into the breakfast-room, and stay there till Marlow comes in to put you to bed."

The little girl kissed her mother, and silently and instantly obeyed; and Master Henry, albeit unused to such implicit obedience, more especially when bed was the mooted point—yet, subdued by his mother's grief, merely shook himself, with most

canine earnestness, and put up his mouth also to be kissed, without uttering a word of resistance, after which, both the children left the room, followed by Alp; and they had no sooner done so, than Mrs. Bousefield resumed the thread of her discourse, and the weight of her argument.

"Now, my dear lady, *do* let me persuade you to go hand tell hall to your par; he looks terrible broken, poor dear hold gentleman; hand hit will be a comfort to his art, any ow, to know has you really *hare* married, and *wat* ave become hof you; honly think—" (and as she spoke, she took the infant gently off its mother's lap, without waking it, for the former seemed scarcely able to support even its little weight) "honly think, I say, what *your* feelings would be, has a mother, hif one hof your children was tootk away from you for six years, hand you didn't know heven whether they was dead hor halive?"

"But—but—Barlow—" sobbed Mrs. Henry, convulsively, "I don't even know where my poor father is to be found in London;" for, like all persons who feel they are doing wrong, she wanted an excuse to herself, however faint, for her conduct.

"But I know—for hit never rains but hit pours, has the sayin his—hand who should I stumble hupon next, when I goes to Mr. Jacobs', in Wardour Street, habout that hare ring, but Mr. Murray—Mr. Halciphron Murray, you know—your par's hold friend; hif there he warn't, sure enough, a-buyin hon a picture, to send has a present to Mr. Wilmot (for you know he halways used to be makin hon im presents, hand such like), hand he hordered the picture to be sent to your par's, hat Colonel Chipchase's, in Palace Gardens, which, you know, his close by here; hand I'm sure that's where he his, for it was hinto a Kensington 'bus has I saw Mr. Wilmot a-gettin."

The *çi devant* Florence Wilmot covered her face with her hands, and groaned aloud—"Oh, if I could even see Alciphron Murray!" she at length exclaimed.

"Well, that's easy too!" said Mrs. Bousefield, "for I heerd

Mr. Jacobs say, has his lodgings was him Bury Street, St. James's."

"Easy!" echoed the poor invalid. "Oh! I dare not; he would never forgive me."

"Hif, by *he*, you means that ere good-for-nothink *usban* of yours—*hexcuse* me, Miss Florence, but **BLACKGUARD**! I call him, to smuggle hup hany wife has he does you; just has hif you was so much rum brandy, hor *counterband baccy*; henstead hof a beautiful young lady, a deal better-born nor he, that hany gent might be proud hof; hand three beautiful hinfants, fit for the Queen hand Prince Halbert, hor the great hexhibition! but *e's* no gentleman, for chains hand rings don't make a gentleman; hor helse hev'ry second boothe hat a fair might set hup for one. Drat! his chains and rings, say I; what's his chains hand rings? hat the best, a little goold, hand a few colored stones; but, for the most part, plenty of brass, hand no stint hof glass; hand, if *that* his a patent for gentility! why, poor dear Mr. Bousefield was has good a gent has hany hon 'em; for, when 'e was butler hand valet, to the dowager countess hof Coddlecat, *he* wore chains hand rings too; but when 'e put the ring hon my finger! 'e knew what was *doo* to a ooman hand a wife; hand when 'e promised hat the halter to hendow me with hall his worldly goods, 'e did not think that meant a burying hon me alive between four walls, without a single comfort hor pleasure, while 'e was a-flourishing habout the world with hevery *lugshurry* hand hextravagance! hand when 'e promised to worship me with 'is body, *he* did not think has *that* meant, a kickin hon me hin 'is tantrums, with the fag hend hon hit! as *your usban* (**BLACKGUARD**! I call him) does you! oh, no, very different from *that*! for, hif so be has I could 'ave heat goold, I might 'ave 'ad it; hand poor dear Mr. Bousefield would 'ave give me diamonds hon the top of that agin; hand has for takin' a *ride* hin the chay without me—tho' we kep' a four wheeler, too—'e'd as soon 'ave thought of flyin'. Hev'ry Sunday, has reglar has the day come, hit was 'Susanner, my

dear, how do you feel disposed? the oss and his master his both hat your service;’ for, ’aving lived so long with the Dowager Countess of Coddlecat, he was a particular *genteel* man was Mr. Bousefield; very much so; but would *I!* be mewed hup for *hany* man has you hare; hand driv here, hand poked there, hon the hodd times, my usban (usban, indeed, BLACK-GUARD! I call him) chose to come hand make a perfect *chimbly* hof the ’ouse, with his nasty smokin’. I ’ate those nasty *harbitary** dispositions, has wants hevery think for self, hand don’t think the world wide enough for hany body helse. No; before I’d submit to such treatment, I’d raise the world pretty well habout his hears, that I would; hat hall events, I’d go to my par, hand tell him hevery think, hand get hout of that feller’s clutches as soon has I could. I’m very sure, hif your poor dear mar was halive, she’d give you the same advice. I honly know, that hif so be has you ’ad a brother, I *would* go to him, hand, has your usband his so fond hof puttin’ hevery think hon his *hown* back, we’d soon see how ’e’d like the feel hof a oss-whip hon it, which I think his the suitablest wear for gents of his description.”

Hercules himself occasionally reposed from his labours, and even Mrs. Bousefield’s tongue (perpetual motion not having yet been discovered,) sometimes required rest, so for a second she paused, quickly adding, however:

“Hand tho I aven’t got the strength of a fly, shouldn’ I like to ’ave the layin of it *accross* his shoulders!”

Apparently the mere thought was exhilarating, for she immediately subjoined,

“There! hif I aven’ come hall hover in one of them tremenjus great eats again! But do, do, my dear lady, be said by me,” she continued, as the large pocket-handkerchief per-

* It will be perceived, that Mrs. Bousefield, with her usual off-hand way of doing business, had fused the two vices of selfishness and tyranny into the one word “arbitrary:” a very common species of verbal chemistry among persons of her class.

formed the double function of fan and towel, "hand go to your par, hand tell him hall."

Now this advice, though sound, was not quite disinterested, (advice seldom is) for sooth to say, Mrs. Bousefield was more than tired of playing the part of a lost Pleiad, at Magnolia Lodge, when, at the termination of the continental tour poor Florence Wilmot had made after her fatal elopement, she had written to her mother's old maid, asking if she would come and superintend her little ménage—the latter had consented with great alacrity to do so, and flown from the cottage at Paddington, where her "widowed art" had taken refuge. For Mrs. Bousefield, being much addicted to genteel comedy, and the Minerva Press, was a great theoretical admirer of elopements, always imagining them to be a sort of matrimonial mosaic of moonlight, myrtles and moustachios, Brussels lace, blush-roses, and postilions. But when she arrived at Magnolia Lodge, perched up on the top shelf of a bye lane, as she herself expressed it, and found only *two* maids without even *one* footman! and two young children, with a third expected, her romantic feelings suddenly and greatly cooled down, and upon a further acquaintance with "Miss Florence's *usban*," her dislike of, and indignation against him grew so excessive, that every pin she stuck into the "WELCOME, SWEET BABE," pincushion, with the construction of which she solaced her leisure hours, she devoutly wished, with a true Catherine de Medici resolution of purpose, that she had been sticking into the "*art of that good-for-nothing feller*," the progenitor of the "sweet babe." And poor Florence—what did she wish? Why, what many a misguided girl has done before, and will, it is to be feared, do again, namely, that she had died before she had left her father's roof, and repaid with deception and ingratitude, the tried and legitimate affection of years, to peril her fate, her life, her all, upon the false vows and spurious love of a comparative stranger. The heaviest sin-tax retributive justice imposes upon those who deviate from the right path, is the compulsory necessity of tak-

ing into their confidence inferior and often unworthy natures; this tax had poor Florence long paid by instalments to her mother's former maid, but now, in order to obtain a cessation from her torturing entreaties to disclose her marriage and present abode to her father, she was compelled to undergo the still further humiliation of confessing to her that she dared not do so, as her husband, having wanted a few months of being of age when he married her, their marriage, if he or his family chose to dispute it, would not be considered binding;*

* The reader may perhaps be surprised that Florence should have been so ignorant as to have been deluded by such a tale; but besides her only having been seventeen at the time of marriage, he must recollect that English young ladies of a much maturer age, (thanks to their for the most part false and very superficial education, began by vulgar foreign governesses, and capped by their mother tongue, as it flows in all its mutilations and vulgar corruptions from English maid-servants) are seldom even well versed in the history, let alone the laws, of their own country; and Florence Wilmot's unprincipled husband had terrified her by showing her a document purporting to be an extract from "Cripp's Ecclesiastical Law," stating that "all marriages celebrated by license when either of the parties are under the age of twenty-one years (not being a widow, or a widower,) without the consent of the father, if he were living, or of the mother or guardians, shall be absolutely void." But the real passage is preceded by this sentence—"It was at one period the law of this country that all marriages celebrated by license, &c.," and followed by this after nullifying clause, the words "should be absolutely void;" but such provision, however, was found to be contrary to general policy, and has been repealed. Such a marriage, although without consent, is now valid, and the parties could not again contract. As for Mrs. Bousefield, like all persons of her class, laws with her, like those of the Medes and Persians; "altered not." She had innumerable fag ends of old laws jostling each other through her brain, but with recent acts of Parliament, and repeals, she could not be expected to keep pace; but still she knew the great broad laws of God, which are immutable, and which, from the lucidity of their perfection, are palpable even to the dullest capacities and most blunted perceptions: therefore had Florence taken her advice, of appealing to, and confiding in her sole remaining parent, and legitimate

that all his expectations of future subsistence were from his aunt, whose avarice and ambition would never brook his having married the portionless daughter of a country clergyman.

At hearing this, Mrs. Bousefield, to do her justice, groaned in unaffected and unmixed sorrow, at length muttering—

“Oh! the orrid *villand*, he his heven worse than I thought him, for hat that rate hit his honly a Brummagem marriage hafter hall! Well, well, you are right; don’t do any think to *herritate* him, hor not content with breakin your art, e might break your marriage, the hartful BLACKGUARD! I call him, to get any decent ’ooman hinto such a trap has that! Why didn’t you never hinsist upon his marrying hof you hover agin, when he was of hage? Not but what once being tied, heven with a slip-knot to such a feller, was quite henough. Oh! hif poor dear Mr. Bousefield was but alive—but there’s no use hin wishing for hunpossibilities. Come, there’s a dear lady, don’t take hon so; we must ope has hall his for the best; hand I’ve brought a Mr. Jacobs, who’ve behaved very andsome about that ring, for he says has hits worth a deal more money than you hask for hit; hand so he came to see has hif so be has you adn’t somethink helse has you could let him ave, of less valley, for the fifty pounds?”

To those overwhelmed with one great and chronic grief, there is a relief even in the small change of petty cares, and so poor Florence found, for drying her eyes, she said—

“But unfortunately, Barlow, I have nothing else, at least nothing that is worth anything like fifty pounds; but it was very honest of him to own that the ring was worth more, and very kind of him to come. I am sorry he has been kept waiting, you had better show him in.”

“Ah! hand hif *some* people would *heredicate away* some

protector, she might, even at this late stage of her fatal error, have been saved a world of misery and remorse, but alas! alas! the *revocare gradus* is the greatest punishment of sin, because the *most* difficult and often impossible part of repentance.

hof *their* rings, chains and conundrums, they would turn hinto a deal hof beef, mutton, groceries and clothes, hand save you being skinned like a *heel* for heverlasting, poor young creeter," muttered Mrs. Bousefield, as she left the room. In the hall she met Marlow, leading off the other two children, and to her she also consigned the baby, briefly saying to her for the present (which, like a solitary clap of thunder, served as a prelude to a future storm)—

"Hits to me the most hunaccountablest thing, to think that the hinstant my back was turned, both you hand Margaret should presume to go hout and leave Mrs. Enry hall halone with them three poor dear hinfants, hand she so hill." And so saying, she snatched up a hand-candle from the hall table and lit it from the one the nurse held in her hand; after which, she opened the dining-room door, and gliding in as far as the centre of the room, she there dropped one of those obsequious and fascinating curtses, such as she used to treat her best customers to in the palmy days of "The Fox and Fiddle."

"Mrs. *Enry* his *hexceedingly* hobliged to you, Mr. Jacobs, for your kindness in having taken the trouble to come hout hall this way, hand hextremely sorry to ave kept you waiting so long; but aving a young *famly* to hattend to, *you*, Mr. Jacobs, has a father hand a usban yourself, can hunderstand that there *his things* that can be better himagined than described!" This last beautifully rounded period Mrs. Bousefield had carefully retained from one of her favourite Minerva Press fictions, entitled, "Lavinia; or, the Victim of Love," which she had that morning been reading; and she thought, as she declaimed it with all the dignity of a tall lady in red cotton velvet, with a long train, and a gold paper tiara, whom she had once seen in the rôle of Statira, at Saddler's Wells, that if ever man was excusable in wishing to commit *Wificide*! Jacobs would be *that* man on *that* night!

Upon Jacobs' entrance, Florence tried to rise, in order the better to thank him, but he begged of her to remain seated,

and at once entered upon the business which had brought him, by saying—

“The ring, Ma’am, which you were good enough to submit to my inspection, is so much more valuable than you seem to be aware of, that I have brought it back, as it would be a great pity you should part with it, even for its full value, as it is one of those things which money cannot always purchase, and I thought you might have something less rare, for which I should be very happy to give you the sum you require.”

“You are very good, and I feel your kindness as it deserves, I assure you; it is a struggle for me to part with that ring, as it was my mother’s, and has been in our family for centuries, in fact, it was given to an ancestress of mine, in James the First’s time, by Lady Hunsdon, to whom Queen Elizabeth had given it in one of her ‘Progresses,’ when she stopped at Lord Hunsdon’s, and it was said to be the counterpart of *the* ring which Elizabeth had given to poor Lord Essex.”

“Well, that makes it still more valuable,” remarked Jacobs.

“Yes,” sighed Florence; “but you know necessity has no law.”

“The more reason, and the more chance then, that it should have *justice*, Ma’am,” rejoined Jacobs.

“But, unfortunately, I really have nothing else at all worth the sum I require.”

“Pardon me, but here is something that perhaps you will not miss so much,” said Jacobs, walking up to a small oil painting, consisting of a group of three badly-drawn figures, meant for angels, which hung in a recess at one side of the mantel-piece.

“Oh! that is a mere daub,” said Mrs. Henry; “not worth fifty shillings, much less fifty pounds.”

“You underrate it,” replied Jacobs, taking it down, and affecting to examine it minutely in every sense; “for it is, or I am much mistaken, one of Domenico Micharino’s, and I shall be very happy to give you fifty pounds for it.”

"Oh! impossible! it does not appear to me to be even of the Florentine school."

"Yes, I think it is in his early manner, when he was still with his benefactor, Beccafumi, before he placed him with Tozzo Capanna at Siena."

Even this illustrious parentage, which Jacobs, with great delicacy and good feeling, so glibly invented for the daub he held in his hand, did not quite deceive the poor invalid, who said, as the tears welled up in her eyes,

"You are very, *very* good, very kind; but I am convinced that daub cannot be worth fifty pounds, and I should be cheating you were I to take it."

"Well, but my good lady," laughed Jacobs, appropriating the picture by wrapping it up in his handkerchief, and then taking the black leather pocket-book from his side-pocket, and abstracting therefrom two £20 notes and two £5, and laying them on the table, "Only think, if it is so, what a feather it will be in your cap to have it to say that, gentle and feminine as you *look*, you have outdone all the clever and fast men in London, by actually *doing a Jew!*"

"But as my ambition does not lie that way, you must excuse my selecting *you* for my victim," said Florence, with a melancholy smile.

"Don't you know," retorted Jacobs, as he prepared to leave the room with the picture under his arm, "that there is no rescue for willing victims?"

"Ha! very true *hendedd*, Mr. Jacobs," sighed Mrs. Bousefield, with a look which, to requote her quotation, "may be more easily imagined than described."

"Do not think me ungrateful for your kindness, which, believe me, I feel to its uttermost extent," cried Florence, as she tottered towards him before he had reached the door, and laid her shadowy hand upon his arm to arrest his departure; "but I cannot accept the money you have left for that worthless daub, without you will oblige me by, at all events, keeping this ring

till I have repaid you what I can only consider as a loan, and a most kind one."

"My dear lady, if you think that your ring would be safer in my house than in yours, I will most willingly take charge of it for you, but I do assure you you owe me nothing, only it is not civil of you to decry *my pictures*; every one is not such a terrible *connoisseur* as you seem to think yourself; and even *connoisseurs*, you know, often pay dearly for their ignorance, therefore I have no doubt that, with a little judicious vamping up, my *Micharino* will realise its full value, for I should be sorry to send you a *Flemish* account of a Florentine picture!"

"But you will keep this ring till I repay you, will you not?" re-urged Florence.

"As I before said, I will with pleasure take care of it for you; but mind it must be upon the express condition that it is to have no reference whatsoever to our little transaction about this picture; on the contrary, as long as this ring remains in my keeping, you may consider that you have £500 at your banker's, for that is what I consider (speaking within bounds) is about the value of it."

Beyond a certain point, it becomes ingratitude to reject an obligation that is delicately as well as generously offered. Florence felt this, and therefore made no further demur about accepting Jacobs' kindness, but merely extended her hand to him, leaving within his, as she shook it, the little green velvet case containing Lady Hundson's ring.

"Mrs. Bousefield, not thinking the moon sufficient, took the candle to reconduct Jacobs across the lawn, not, however, without having first pressed upon his acceptance "a cup of tea, hor a glass of *ot negus*; such as she used to make for poor dear Mr. Bousefield." But being a sultry night in June, he resisted all these Circean blandishments, and walked steadily to the gate, merely stopping to wish his conductress good night, and ask her where was the nearest place he should meet with an omnibus. As the gate closed upon him, and the widow retraced her steps

across the lawn, she silenced the nightingales with the following soliloquy :

"Hornibus, hindeed ! 'busses was hinvented before Hornibuses. Poor dear Mr. Bousefield would not have wanted hany ooman to tell *him* where to find a 'buss ; but laws ! the men's such a pack of noodles now, very different from what they used to be."

The World, the Flesh and the Devil.

SECTION V.

"Ye have need of patience."—*Heb. x. 36.*

"He has every thing that an honest man
Should not have. Of what an honest man
Should have, he has nothing."—*Shakespeare.*

"And deadlier than the Syroc, or Simoom,
Unkindness, blighting young affection's bloom,
In nature's darkest frowns there lurks below,
No deeper vengeance that survives the blow."
Lady Marshall's Odds and Ends."

MRS. BOUSEFIELD had scarcely regained the hall door, before a loud and violent ringing at the gate obliged her to return, more, it must be confessed, out of curiosity than complaisance, for she "*dratted!*" the gate (whatever that means) the whole way she went, and muttered: "Swiffins himself would have give way hunder the continual ringing of that ere gate bell, though e ad the legs of a chairman, whereof I avent got those of a fly," which, exclusive of the compliment to Swiffins (who had been the Dowager Lady Coddlecat's porter) was strictly true nevertheless; and notwithstanding this great anatomical disadvantage, which Mrs. Bousefield seemed to think she laboured under, she reached the gate with equal, if not greater celerity, and still continuing her theories of creation out of this entomological chaos, she seemed to have purloined the sting of a

wasp for the end of her tongue, determined to give the visitors (whoever it might be,) the benefit of it, as she pulled open the gate with so violent a jerk, that had she not clung to the handle as pertinaciously as she did to her weeds, it must have knocked her down more effectually, than any feather yet moulted from the wing of Time; nor did the intense glare of two patent carriage lamps, coming full in her eyes, add to her good humour, more especially when she perceived the well-known dark green striped brougham, with its wheels picked out in cream colour, and bright silver centres, while the impatient pawing of the high-mettled and thorough-bred chestnuts, seemed to partake of the nature of their owner. Not giving the servant time to get down, the occupant of the carriage, a young man in full dress—for he was going out to a dinner—jumped out, nearly flooring Mrs. Bousefield in his hurry, which was no wonder, since Pope has told us that

“A wit’s a feather.”

“How’s your mistress, Barlow?” said he, as he rushed past her.

Now, notwithstanding the widow’s rooted aversion to this personage, who was no other than Florence’s husband, yet so strong was her respect for carriages, and horses, and all the outward and visible signs of wealth, which she shared in common with all persons of her class, that had his satanic majesty come in *propria persona*, in so unexceptionable a turn-out, however her olfactory nerves might have been offended by the sulphureous odour on his handkerchief, of “*Extrait d’Enfer*,” or her eye for the beautiful have been shocked by the unsymmetrical cleft of his feet, yet nevertheless, her curtesy would have been as deferential as it was in the present instance, when she replied to Mr. Henry’s query:

“She’s hany think but well, sir; hand I don’t see has she his hever likely to be hotherwise hin this mopified solemn-

choly* land's hend, hor rather *grave's* hend, *I* call it, sort of place."

"Ah!" said Mr. Henry, stopping suddenly short in his onward career and pulling his under lip, "you think this place too dull for her? Well, I have long thought so; and, indeed, I see and feel she wants change of air; she is always so much better abroad, but I cannot persuade her. Now, I wish you, Mrs. Bousefield, as a sensible, experienced woman, would try and convince her that she—that is, that her health would be so much better abroad; the change of scene; the change of air; in short, the whole thing would be better."

Now it so happened, that in his ordinary commerce with the widow, Mr. Henry called her Barlow; and it was only on special occasions, like the present, when he wished to gain her "vote and interest" for any particular point, that he bestowed upon her her magniloquent matronly title of Bousefield. So well aware was she of this fact, that she invariably began to starch up into the same sort of inflexible, unyielding rigidity as one of her own widow's caps, when he so addressed her, being perfectly aware that he wanted something from her, and equally determined to withhold that something; or, at least, grant it as unwillingly as possible: moreover, the wooden gates had now shut out the dazzling equipage from her view, and nothing but the objects of her rooted aversion, the obnoxious chains, studs, and rings, glittered before her; therefore, tightly folding her arms, as if to gird her stern resolve more firmly around her, she replied in her driest and most ungracious tone, with the usual emphatic pause between every word—

"Hit *his* because I *ham* han *hexperienced* ooman, sir, both has wife and widder, that I could not think hof recommending hof Mrs. *Enery* to go habroad, hunless she ad the purtection of a usban, hand such comforts has a lady *oright* to ave; for I

* This delicious word is Sam Slick's, and is worthy of finding its way into the lexicons of at least all *solemncholy* nations, like England.

know what furrin parts his too well, without neither feather beds nor footmen, nor hany one hindividual thing to make life hendurable, hever to think hof recommending hof *hany* lady, let alone one hin the *delicat* state hof ealth hof Mrs. Enery, to hencounter with hany think hof the sort, *hunless*, as I said before, you was to hacompany hof her has a usban, hand have as sich, with a courier fargone,* and such like; hon the *contrairy*, my hadvice, has far has such a umble *individel* has a confederal servant may presume to give hadvice, would be, *don't go*; for *I* wouldn't go for to be poked hof hout hof the way for *nobody*!—that I wouldn't."

"Oh! I mean to join her the moment the House is up," said Mr. Henry, caressing what Mrs. Bousefield was wont to denominate "one of them little *tweedledum, ridiclus curls*" of his right whisker; for it appears that the late "Mr. Bousefield" was not in the habit of dividing *his* whiskers into sections in this manner, but went on "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" system, and brushed them out into one grand universal equality.

"Ha!" muttered Mrs. Bousefield, as she followed "Mrs. Enery's master," as she called him into the hall, "most ladies, I should think, was pretty well hup to *wot* the *ouse* means by *this* time; for them two ouses hof parliament haint nothink more than ha reglar blind hand harbour for hall the goings hon hof the gents hof hevery kind, for when hever they'se been hafter hany think has they shouldn't (which his pretty well the honly think has they hever his hafter), hof course it's halways 'I've been down hat the ouse, my dear,' hand so, hof course, they *ave*, at some sort of ouse hor hother! though for that matter hit his much hof a muchness, six hof one, *alf-a-dozen* hof the hother."

And with this concluding reflection she flung open the

* It is supposed that Mrs. Bousefield meant a *fourgon*; but, as "*la pelle se moque du fourgon*"—and she was evidently enacting the former,—she transformed the latter into fargone.

drawing-room door, if not with the grace, at least with all the *aplomb* of a groom of the chambers, and announced—

“Mr. Enery, mum!”

“Well, my dear Flo, how do you feel to-day?” said he, holding out two fingers to her, but at the same time stopping before a glass to arrange his hair, so that in order to take them she must have risen from the sofa and walked half-way across the room, which she did not do. Having at length sufficiently hyperionised himself, as he conceived, he walked to the sofa, and seated himself beside her.

“Really, my dear Florence,” cried he, affecting to look into her pale and wasted face with much concern, “I am quite unhappy about you; this place evidently does not agree with you; I must get you abroad, my dear love, and I will join you the moment the House is up.”

“Oh, no! I would rather remain quietly here; I feel I could never bear the journey,” said the poor invalid, with a hollow cough, that but too well confirmed her assertion; after which she added, stretching out her hand towards the bell, as if she dreaded a *tête-à-tête* with her husband, “I don’t think the children are in bed yet; *do* wish them good-night, Henry.”

“Oh! for heaven’s sake, don’t disturb them,” cried he, laying his hand on hers to prevent her ringing the bell; “pray my dear Florence, spare me their quotidian pawings, and when they grow up I shall be happy to receive the aggregate of their filial duty and affection.”

The poor mother sighed; the husband frowned; for there is no conjugal high treason like sighs or tears, before the cause of them.

“Come, Florence,” he resumed, taking her small thin hand in his, “don’t be foolish; is there anything you wish for, or anything that you wish to do?”

“Oh, Henry!” she exclaimed, bursting into tears, as her head fell upon his shoulder, from which he rather recoiled, for the ice within dreaded lest the snowy folds of his cambric shirt

should be deranged, "Do, do let me only tell my father where I am, and that I *am your wife*, and not your mistress, which I'm sure the whole neighbourhood, including your servants, think me; he is in town, close by here, in Palace Gardens; Barlow saw him to-day, and she says he looks both broken, and broken-hearted."

Upon hearing this, her husband effectually shook her off, and starting from the sofa, paced the room with folded arms, and sternly-knit brows, as he champed his nether lip till the blood nearly flowed from it; at length, pausing opposite his wife, he said, in a half-reproachful, half-resigned voice—

"I see, Florence, you are bent upon ruining me. I don't even blame you, perhaps the proceeding is a natural one; I only doubt whether, under the peculiar circumstances of our position, it is a very humane one; but the world will, of course, acquit you, and I hope, upon reflection, your own heart will do the same; you are aware that our marriage once known, all my future prospects in life are blasted—all hope of a single sixpence from my aunt is at an end. But, of course, you are my wife; only remember, your tenure of the title is *my honour*!"

However a man that she had once loved may pile up the faggots for a woman's *auto-da-fé*, the moment a spark flies out from the pyre upon *him*, and that he winces under it, her heart immediately softens, and yearns towards him; and so did that of Florence, at her selfish husband's insinuation—of *her* exoneration being *his* ruin; but the last dastardly inuendo of her merely being his wife upon sufferance, or the impalpable tenure of *his honour*! and above all, the withering sneer with which it was uttered, froze up all her gushing feelings, and she drew up, cold, calm, and impassable, as if she had been a statue, or had become stone of his stone! such perfect marble did she feel towards him. But he soon perceived his error, and endeavoured to repair it; for no one was better aware, that more flies are caught with honey than by vinegar; and when a scheme had to be worked out, and a point to be carried, he knew, that even

with a wife (that legitimate target), blows and threats were not the arms wherewith to insure a victory ; so, changing his tactics, he now approached, and taking her hand, said,—

“Forgive me, Florence, if I said anything to wound you, which was the farthest possible thing from my intention, I do assure you ; but when a man is badgered and hunted from without, and finds no comfort in his *home*, only constant tears and reproaches, and has no future prospect but ruin staring at him from an eminence, he is not always master of himself.”

“Ah ! if this *was* your home, Henry, humble as it is, you might perhaps find more happiness in it, than you do in the brilliant but hollow world beyond it,” she replied, raising her tearful eyes to his.

“Well, well, and so it would be in time, if my own Flo would only listen to reason ;” and he passed his arm round her waist, and drew her coaxingly towards him.

“Oh, Henry, have I not listened for six long miserable years to what you call reason, till I have nearly lost my own ?”

“But listen to me now, my own dear love. If we were abroad, you might then write to your father, declaring our marriage, only enjoining him to secrecy.”

“It’s no marriage, and you know it,” broke in Florence, passionately.

“Well, but—the moment my aunt dies—and hang it, she *can’t* live for ever, though old women *are* most pertinaciously obstinate about their vitality—it has always been my intention to marry you over again, and so make my own little Flo doubly mine, thereby proving to all the world how much ‘the wife is dearer than the bride,’” which last quotation he enunciated in a theatrical tone of stage devotion.

“Oh ! Henry, Henry !” cried Florence, solemnly, “there must be, there *will* be, depend upon it, a curse upon any bridal where death is waited for, as the high priest, to celebrate it.”

“Who told you I was waiting for any death to marry ?” almost shrieked her husband, as he darted from her, as if a serpent had stung him, while his eyes glared like a tiger at bay.

"Heavens ! how you frighten me ! Did you not yourself say, that when your aunt died—"

"True, true, love, what a fool I am," said he, re-seating himself beside her, and passing his handkerchief over his forehead, as if with that one gesture he had thrust back a whole infernal legion ; but, my own Flo, you are not well ; and we will talk of our future plans some other time."

"There is no future for some, but eternity," sighed the poor sufferer, as she covered her face with her hands, as if, at all events, she was anxious to shut out the present.

"My little wife is low and hipped, and decidedly I must get her out of this," said her companion, caressingly, "for as that d—d long-tongued molehill, overgrown with weeds Bar low, says, the place is too dull and secluded for you."

"Not so, Henry : would it were even more so—a perfect tomb—provided it could hide me from every one, but most of all, from myself !"

Another strong frown, knit, like an iron vice, the gentleman's brow, but he quickly exchanged it for a smile, as he said,—

"I had come to ask my little Flo a favour, one which I don't think she'll refuse me ; will she ?"

"Alas, what is there left me, either to give, or to refuse ?"

"Yes, yes, my own love, there is—for instance, to give me the greatest happiness, by consenting to go abroad, and take care of your health ; or else to entail upon me the greatest misery, by refusing to do so."

"I thought," said Florence, languidly, "we were not to talk of that any more to-night."

"Neither will we, it shall be all as my little Flo pleases. And now for my request, which is, that you would lend me that ring of Lady Hunsdon's, as I am to dine at Lord Antwerp's to-day, and he is all *cinque cento*, so I want to show it to him."

"How very unfortunate that I have not got it here ; but

to-morrow I could get it for you," said poor Florence, as a crimson flush suffused her pale cheek.

"Not got it here! why what on earth have you done with it?"

"I—I—had two bills that must be paid to-morrow; and I wanted fifty pounds, and so I gave that ring as security for it."

"Wanted fifty pounds! and so gave a ring worth several hundreds as security for it. I say nothing of the egregious folly of such a proceeding; but I wonder your sense of propriety did not point out to you the indignity of such a transaction on the part of *my wife*!"

"Ah! who knows that I am your wife, Henry?—or anybody's wife; and how am I to pay the house bills, when you always tell me you have no money, and that I must wait."

"Money!" echoed Mr. Henry, rising, and actually endangering the sit of his hair, by thrusting the fingers of both hands through it, "d—n me if I don't think women believe that men are made of money; it must be devilish bad management to be always wanting money for this small house. Why don't you feed those brats upon oatmeal and potatoes? No children so hardy and healthy as those of the Scotch and Irish peasantry who are so fed. I have certain theories about the training of children; and now, once for all, *positively forbid* their being stuffed with beef and mutton till they become little premature obesities."

"But it is not only their food, which is very trifling, for they are *not* crammed with beef and mutton, but they must be clothed too; and even the smallest establishment, however economically conducted, is a continual source of expense, for servants must eat, at least I know they will do so."

"Must be clothed! another prejudice that I particularly object to. Read Rousseau's *Emilius*; let them sprawl about almost naked; that is the way to rear them, if you would have healthy children, and not little puny, stunted beings."

"I have read Rousseau at your request, and the beauty of

his style only appeared to me to bring out into stronger relief the hideousness of his moral obliquity, and his gross and reckless violation of all the laws *even* of NATURE, the only Divinity which he professed to worship, nor did her high Priestess TRUTH fare one bit better at his hands."

"Oh! so we are erecting ourselves into a critic," sneered the husband, suddenly pausing in his peripatetics, and looking with glaring eyes at his victim. "But permit me to assure you, madam, that sarcasm disfigures a woman's mouth, even more than wrinkles."

"I am not sarcastic," rejoined Florence mildly, "at least, I did not intend to be so. I merely meant to say, that I did not think the precepts of a bad man, however faultless the style might be with which he gilt them, could ever be good or desirable guides, and what I once heard one of Rousseau's compatriots say of him, I think was a just estimate of the man; he said that instead of being '*L'homme de la nature, et de la vérité*,' as he called himself, he was in reality *l'homme de beaux sentiments, et d'indignes actions*!"

"What a d—d narrow-minded beast your friend must have been! quite incapable of comprehending such a vast genius as Rousseau's."

"I don't know whether he was narrow-minded, but I know he had a large heart, and was a thoroughly good man in every relationship of life."

Again Mr. Henry frowned, but this time it was with the accompaniment of a shrug of the shoulders, as he said, "Well, there is no use in women talking about what they don't understand, or in expecting that the finite should appreciate the infinite; but, may I ask into whose hands you so imprudently (and I must say with such a total disregard to *my honour* and your own dignity) entrusted that very valuable ring, which of course you will never see again; for having got it on such easy terms, the man would be a fool to give it up."

"You wrong him, I assure you," said Florence warmly, "for

nothing could be more generous, nay, more noble, than his conduct! for he gave me the fifty pounds for a small picture worth in reality nothing, and wanted not even to take the ring at all, which he said was worth £500, but I insisted that he should at least keep it till I had repaid him the fifty pounds; and yet this man was a Jew. Would that there were more Christians like him!"

"And pray what is the name of this Mosaic dove? or goose, perhaps, would be the more appropriate epithet for him."

"His name is Jacobs, he keeps one of those curiosity shops in Wardour Street."

"Hell! and the Devil!" vociferated her husband with almost maniac fury, "the idea of your becoming *lié* with that fellow! When, where in the name of Lucifer did you become acquainted with this man?"

"Really, Henry, you alarm me, for you speak of him as if he were a fiend, whereas he struck me as being one of the kindest and most benevolent of men, though I can't say that I know him, for I never saw him before to-day."

"And how came you to see him to-day?" asked her companion, his eyes flaming, and his voice gasping between every word, as if his throat had been as dry and calcined as an extinct volcano.

"It was Barlow, whom I trusted with my ring to dispose of, who brought him here, for he was too honest to take advantage of my necessity."

"*Here!* so he has been *here!* in this—in *my* house! And he knows who you are!"

"He knows that I am called *Mrs. Henry!*" replied Florence, with a look so cold, so penetrating, so almost contemptuous, that it reduced the burning rage of her husband's cheek into the ashy pallor of shame.

He seemed to ponder for a few seconds, and then resuming his caressing, wooing tone, said, as he re-seated himself beside her, and took her burning but almost shadowy hand,—

"Forgive me, my dear Florence, all my wayward violence, but

men have ten thousand shoals and quicksands in public life, which women in the safe harbours of their own homes never dream of."

"But why should they not dream of them? I do not ask to share your happiness or your triumphs, Henry; but surely your sorrows and your dangers, if I *am* your wife! I have a right to share. What is the use of my being plunged in the midst of this sea of troubles, if I may not at least serve as a Pharos to you in time of danger? Tell me—*do* tell me who and what this man is who seems so good, so kind, that he should be *your* enemy?"

This phoenix-like devotion, rising up bright and pure as it did, from out the ashes of an extinct love, *almost*—

"Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek."

Besides, extremes meet, and never oftener than in bad natures, for all the passions being, as Balzac truly says, "*essentially Jesuitical*," they never move but in triplets, namely the *pro* and the *con*, accompanied by the prudential ambassador, who has to report to the Grand Inquisitor SELF. Mr. Henry, therefore, perceived that fusion, and not freezing, was the process by which he could best mould his victim to his purposes.

"Florence!" cried he, folding her in his arms, "you are an angel, and I will yet be worthy of you, or, at least, I will try to be so. When I called this Jacobs my enemy, the term was perhaps too strong, and, therefore, inappropriate; for enmity implies individuality; whereas, national and party antipathies are too diffuse and diluted to come within the pale of personal animosity; but though you don't trouble that pretty little head about politics, you must know that I have made myself rather obnoxious lately to the Israelites, by the active part I have taken in 'The Jewish Disabilities Bill;' and, therefore, I will send my own darling a check for £50 to-morrow, and she must get back her ring from this Jacobs, and *promise me* to have no more to do with him, for it is more than probable that this man is my enemy."

"You know the Italian proverb?" said Florence, with a melancholy smile, '*a thousand probabilities don't make one fact*;' and this Jacobs appeared to me too good to be anybody's enemy; but, of course, as you wish it I will not have any further communication with him, though it grieves me to think that I shall not see again one who was so very kind to me in an emergency."

Another frown knit her husband's brow, but he concealed it by bending forward to kiss and thank her for this concession. Time was when half the assumption of kindness which he had displayed at this interview, would have winged her spirit towards the highest heaven; but now that poor, crushed spirit had so long been a solitary wanderer amid the desolate marshes and quagmires of disappointment, and had been so often lacerated against the sharp and flinty inequalities of that rugged and sinking soil, that even the soft shadow cast by the white wings of the Angel of Hope! as it flitted for a moment across her heart, weighed at first too heavily upon her, and oppressed instead of cheering her. Still, in that brief transit it had fulfilled its mission of mercy and of healing, for her tears, usually bitter as the waters of Mara, now fell soft and genial, like Hermon's dew upon her soul, till it was no longer sunk in the depths of despond, but floated buoyantly, for some seconds, higher and higher beyond the narrow fretting confines of this limited and preliminary existence, into worlds of graduated perfection and indescribable grandeur, such as it is given to minds of the highest, that is, of the purest order to catch glimpses of from out the loop-holes of their own immortality!

There sat united, yet widely separated, those two opposite natures—the one chastened and spiritualised, till it was made almost "perfect through tribulation;" the other, hardened in self-sufficiency; puffed up with worldly prosperity, and "of the earth, earthy," in its every emanation, the whole being alone vivified by the pale, cold beam of intellectuality, which, when not ruled by the sanctifying influences of a higher orb, creates

and keeps the passions reptiles, which, though called into existence by a ray from above, yet delight to wallow in, and never quit their native mire. Alas! poor human nature! when will it learn that vanquished selfishness is the aegis of a deeper wisdom and a purer happiness than any behind which it has yet taken refuge, in the hope of subduing and of acquiring; for even OMNIPOTENCE *does not suffice to itself*; else had creation never been the myriad marvel that it is! Great, oh man! is the march of thy mind upon the waves of *outward* progress!—wondrous! thy penetration into the hidden depths of science! but when! oh! when will the *practical* conviction of the Saviour's precepts pass, like the mighty shadow of His coming Divinity, over the militant Marathon of thy *inner* world, and smite, without a blow, the deadliest of all foes—thine own unregenerate heart? *Then*, and not till then, shall ye indeed “be as gods knowing good from evil.” Nothing else has—nothing else *can* bring “peace on earth, good will towards men;” for then shall each man be, what in “God’s image” he was first created, having within himself the type of all things in heaven and on earth. This world’s narrow barriers of caste, country, sect, though they have heretofore been of iron and of adamant, shall be fused into one harmonious whole in the New Jerusalem of each wide-opened soul; and those petty ministers of paltry passions, now accredited by SELF, thrust out to have their place re-peopled by the apostles of great TRUTHS. All kindreds and all kinds will then be there; those of all aptitudes, and all instincts, of all grades, and of all conditions, from the great Chief that once wore Israel’s mighty crown, and the genius that swayed the wide realms of Babylon, to the poor herdsman of Tekoah, the fisherman of Galilee, the dark slave of Afric’s burning soil, and the still more wretched slaves of an oblique and spurious civilization, all, all, will then have met in that blest Canaan, promised from the first, and come at last! of Christian sympathy and universal fellowship!

But poor Mr. Henry was not even a *professed*, much less a

regenerated Christian. The great spiritual battle of Armageddon had still to be fought out in his heart, against that fell autocrat, Intellectual Supremacy, and the false prophets of scepticism. Woe is me! how many minds, from their wide arena, are measured for this decisive conflict in which it never takes place! And yet there were moments when even, on the seared heart of this bold, bad man, patience and long-suffering, those attributes of Divine power, of which his victim was the delegate, smote the rock of his better nature, and the living waters of compassion and remorse for a moment gushed forth; but, alas! only for a moment; and such a moment was the present. Something like a tear almost glistened in his eye, as again encircling her waist, he said—

"My poor Florence, you *really* do want change from this monotonous solicitude."

There was a jar in the word *really*, which grated harshly on the sufferer's ear; for it sounded as if it came only to prop the hollow pretext for his putting her still farther away; and leaving her to buffet with life and death, alone, and unaided, as best she might.

"No, Henry," said she, gazing earnestly into his eyes, with that lever of intense expression, which raises the densest weight of hidden purpose in another heart, to the open level of our own; "it is a further *change* that I dread; had you *never changed*, I could have borne it!"

He turned away to avoid the scrutiny of her eyes; but ostensibly to reach another pillow, which, placing at her back, he said, in a tone which for that consummate art which stereotypes nature, David Garrick, or Edmund Kean might have envied.

"*Never changed!* and is it *my* fault, if my own Florence has made me love her ten times better now than I did the first day I called her mine?"

Florence slightly shook her head, for she did not like to meet with uttered incredulity even this hollow semblance of

affection ; and yet love's fanaticism having long subsided under coldness and neglect, she had not sufficient faith to evidence things so perfectly unseen as the proofs of her husband's increased attachment ; their interview had now arrived at one of those embarrassing crises, which are wont to occur in all *tête-à-têtes*, between the injurer and the injured ; the husband was nervously anxious to terminate it, yet was awkwardly perplexed how to do so with a good grace ; while the wife was well content to lull her heart with even the phantom that had been evoked of a long-buried love, and let it rest for a moment on the soft echo of those gentle words ; so that for a few seconds neither of them spoke.

But Mrs. Bousefield—who in the establishment of Magnolia Lodge always enacted towards Florence the same part that “Shock,” in the “Rape of the Lock,” did towards Belinda : that is, whenever she thought her mistress “slept” or did anything else too long—

“Leapt up, and waked her, *with her tongue !*”

now entered with a bonnet in one hand, and a victorine and a cashmere shawl slung over her other arm ; while for the deportment necessary to suit this *mise en scène*, she had again recourse to her reminiscences of Saddler's Wells : but this time it was in the “genteel comedy line,” that she had determined upon “*coming out strong*.” So putting on a set smile, and throwing all that bewitching impertinence into her eyes, which chambermaids and *soubrettes*, are wont to hurl at their masters *on* the stage ; but which if resorted to off it, would cause them very soon to be shown the outside of the house, she said—

“H've brought you your things mum, for hit's the beautifullest moonlight night has hever was ; hand I was quite sure has Mr. *Enery* was come for to take you for a *ride* !” looking all the while with defiance at Mr. Henry.

“Nonsense, Barlow, you know I'm not able to go out.”

“Thus re-assured, Mr. Henry chimed in with “Perhaps,

love, *Mrs. Bousefield* is right, and that a drive *would* do you good; don't you think you *could* make an effort, and just come with me as far as Antwerp House?"

"Humph!" argued Mrs. Bousefield, silently, within the depths of her own capacious store-room of a mind; "drat! the man, hif that haint the second time has he've called me Mrs. Bousefield, since he've been here; hand two Mrs. Bousefields hin one night, I know, haint no good for nobody!"

"No," said Florence; "I could not get as far as the gate, much less into the carriage."

"Well, perhaps in a day or two," rejoined Mr. Henry, taking out his watch, one of Brequet's *chef-d'œuvres*, so small, and so flat, that it could have glided with ease into the narrowest possible interstices of the tightest Russian uniform. "By Jove!" added he; "it's a quarter past eight; so I must say good bye, love—now, take care of yourself, and get better soon;" and he kissed her pale lips, while Mrs. Bousefield virtuously puckered hers up, as if *they* had never been used to such doings, and by no means liked being an idle spectator of those sort of proceedings: however, she opened them to remark as she followed Mr. Henry to the hall door, to open it for him—

"Has for Mrs. Enry a taking care hof herself, you'll *hexcuse me* sir, but I consider *that* quite out hof character, when she has a usban to take care hof er, leastways as *should* take care hof er. Do you think has poor dear Mr. Bousefield hever let *me* do a *hindivedgel* thing for myself? no, he halways did for me as every usban has *is* a husband, wishes to do for their wives."

"A great many of them, at least, Mrs. Bousefield," rejoined Mr. Henry, with an attempt at a facetious laugh, which, however, died away almost like a death-rattle in his throat, as the night wind seemed to return a mocking echo; "but," added he, stopping for one moment at the gate, "you *must* try and get Mrs. Henry well, to go abroad, for I know it is the only thing that will do her any good."

Mrs. Bousefield's reply was lost in air, for the next instant Mr. Henry had sprung into the carriage, the servant had given to the coachman the word of command, "Antwerp House!" and the octagonal echoes of the high-stepping horses' hoofs resounded along the green lane, and through the depths of Florence's seared and withered heart.

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION VI.

"Charity covereth a multitude of sins."

"A fair tongue oft doth varnish over a black heart, and it is after this fashion that some persons do set their light to shine before men."—*Sermon of the Rev. T. Hoadly, preached before the Lord Protector.*

THERE was a great Emigration meeting at "The Crown and Anchor," in the Strand, for the furtherance of Mrs. Chisholm's benevolent labours. Henry Ponsonby Ferrars, Esq., M. P. was in the chair, but in the ragged, run-to-seed-looking whiskers of the chairman, the partially washed out and slightly shrunken buff kerseymere waistcoat, the loosely hanging blue surtout, the carelessly tied black neckerchief, the blotting-paper-coloured trousers, unstrapped to the clean, but lack-lustre boots, the *dark* kid gloves, the *one* vulgar-looking mourning ring, modelled upon a small square tea-tray, with the words "*sacred to friendship!*" inscribed in gold relief round its black ground and purchased for the occasion, that very morning at a shop in the Strand, a few doors off; and the heavy warming-pan of a silver hunting watch, that had replaced the elegant little *brequet*, the whole surmounted by a scrupulously brushed, but not over new beaver, *strangers* would have at once defined the itinerant philanthropist, and a hard-working M. P., but his intimate associates would scarcely have recognized the "exquisite" Ferrars! or the most far-gone young lady devotees of his "delight-

ful novels!" have suspected that this was their pet lion. The fact was, that gentleman was now in his working clothes, and as a staunch Free-trader, and a sixty Howard-power philanthropist, he thought it necessary to dress up to these two rôles, and assume an air half-Cobden, half-Cloutts. On this day, he was like "a man to double duty bound," for after the emigration meeting, he had, at this same tavern, to preside at a Temperance meeting. So being, as we before stated, in his working dress, to work he accordingly went. After the cheers which had greeted his arrival had subsided, he proceeded to address the meeting in a forcible and eloquent manner, upon the blessings of emigration, beginning with a well-merited eulogium upon that real benefactress to her species, Mrs. Chisholm; a panegyric which lost none of its truth, or of its justice, by coming from lips through which neither the one nor the other were accustomed to issue. After setting forth "how absurd were the prejudices against emigration, nay more, how wicked, since—

'All countries that the eye of heaven visits,
Are to a wise man *homes*, and happy havens!'

it was evidently flying in the face of Providence, who as population increased from time to time, opened unsuspected portals of this great globe for their accommodation, he remarked that had mankind obstinately persisted in clinging to the *one* spot which had given them birth,—instead of the onward and all-conquering march of civilization,—what at the present time would be the stagnant and fetid state of the world,—*physically* as well as *morally*, at the advent of every new blessing—to the human race, whether in science, ethics, or statistics, there was sure to be a crusade raised against it; but thank heaven, like their religious prototypes against the Infidels, it was only to make TRUTH more resplendently triumphant in the end. Sir Thomas Browne even, speaking of the so-called new world, terms it 'That great *antiquity*, America, which lay buried for a thousand years, and a large part of the earth is still in the urn for

us.' True, but it will gradually be *un-urned*, for the heritage of future generations; yet, even when the giant gates of this wide new world were unbarred and thrown invitingly open, men were at first reluctant to leave their sterile, narrow Father-land, because HOME! that most cabalistic of all spells, was the name by which toil had been rendered dear, and penury made sacred to them!—And yet, my friends, what is it that constitutes HOME? that Holy of Holies!—of every Englishman's social creed: certainly, *not* the bare earth!—on which his cottage, or his castle stands: not even the fair view, teeming with broad lands and ancestral trees; or the still more cherished peasant's garden, bright with its roses and its pansies, those fresh fragrant memories of Labour's leisure hours, no! no! my friends, you all are aware and *feel* it better than I can tell it to you, that it is the *peopled heart* which constitutes a HOME. The gentle, loving, winning wife, weak it may be in her strength, but still strong in her weakness; since *that* it is, which is at once man's impetus and his reward, the gradually expanding human blossoms clinging to their parent stem. The common air made musical with childhood's guileless mirth. *These* my friends, it is, which in reality constitute a HOME and *with which*, the wide world itself is but one universal HOME." (Tremendous cheers!) —"But," resumed the chairman; "there is also another argument strongly in favour of emigration; it is not only because that in these distant regions, and more genial climes, there is no Corn Law League, no Bread Bluebeards, to reap human harvest, but that because MAN, all 'paragon of animals' though he be, has his appointed stages of germination and progression in common with the humblest grain;—and the little acorn of one hemisphere is, according to the immutable laws of nature, destined to become the stately oak,—the Forest King of another. There is an anecdote strikingly illustrative of this proposition. A venerable seaman yet alive, has remarked that when a very young midshipman leaning one day over the bulwarks of his ship at Portsmouth, he saw a small squadron pass. It was

that which carried on board the first batch of convicts sent to Botany Bay. His captain, who was walking the quarter-deck, approached, and touching him on the shoulder said : ' Mark these vessels well, and remember them ; they are going to lay the foundation of a great empire. Forty years ago, perhaps thirty, the certainty of the fulfilment of this prophecy might have appeared problematical : but who can doubt now that it will be fulfilled to the letter,' and if an empire deserving the name of *great*, could thus be founded by felons, how much greater a one may we not hope to found with men free from all reproach, save that of poverty ? For my own part, I do not hesitate to assert that had my lot in life been cast in a different and what is *conventionally* called *an* humbler though on that account by no means a morally inferior sphere, I should instantly, even as a matter of ambitious speculation, have gone out myself and taken my family (had Providence blessed me with one) to Australia. It is true, that the numbers who voluntarily expatriate themselves are daily increasing ; but it is to be feared that it is only *expediency* which makes them yield to the declared will of Heaven, when it *ought* to be from the desire of usefulness ; not that *even* usefulness, though it be cultivated into a passion (as it is with the amiable patroness of this great cause, Mrs. Chisholm), is to be constituted the *end of action*, for mind, though it be highly estimated, is *not* to be unduly exalted beyond its proper subordinate sphere. As virtue must be esteemed for *itself*, rather than for the immunities attached to its exercise, therefore should every man in emigrating think more of the benefit he is conferring in his generation and upon future generations yet unborn, than of his own individual welfare, or else *selfishness*, that universal principle of evil, will be continually warring against all projected good ; and their re-commenced lives, if I may so express myself, will be passed in an endless struggle between the imperative duties of principle and the equally imperious and more seductive appeals of passion ; this is no novel and still less no controvertible asser-

tion, for do not all the phenomena of the physical world result from a sustained counter agency! In shaking hands, therefore, like a *brother* with each member of the great human family that is 'outward bound,' I would yet say to him with the earnestness of a Pilgrim Father—

“‘LET NO MAN LIVE FOR, OR SUFFICE TO HIMSELF ALONE!’”

The honorable gentleman then sat down, amid thunders of applause, a hurricane of cheers, and a perfect snow-storm of white handkerchiefs!

As soon as the Emigration Meeting had migrated, and Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had recruited his exhausted energies with a tumbler of sparkling moselle, the benches were dusted, and the room re-arranged (that is, everything was taken out of it) for the accommodation of the Temperance Meeting, the members of which now began to pour in like the element which they delighted to honor. Perhaps never had so many fat people, male and female, been congregated in the same place, at the same time; which showed that, however they might eschew fluids, they did not evince equal strength of mind in resisting solids. The chairman, who had puffed out his hair like a ship in full sail, for his Emigration Speech, now flattened it down as if it had been undergoing a course of hydropathy for a quarter of an hour, under the pump, in order to “suit the action to the word” for his present auditory. Nevertheless he commenced his harangue with great spirit, till no doubt feeling the incongruity of anything like spirit at a Temperance Meeting, he gradually flowed on

“In one weak washy flood away,”

which so calmed the nerves of one very fat lady, in a blue watered silk, and toast-and-water-coloured bonnet, that gradually falling to leeward upon a stout gentleman's shoulder, she slept as soundly as if she had been on a water-bed; though, at the same time, as noisily as if she had been to a cattle-show, and had bought an infant pig, and was bringing him home in her

throat. Now, it so happened, that Tim having put up the cabriolet, and finding himself a gentleman at large, for at least three good hours, had got hopelessly and unpardonably drunk; which being nuts to low vulgar natures like his, he had gone into the gallery, with his pockets filled with hazel-nuts, which he began cracking, along with sundry jokes, at what he called the *speechefying*; and just as his master was soaring high in one of his happiest similies, something about James Watt, the origin of steam, and a tea-kettle, whereby he clearly demonstrated that the tea-kettle was the only legitimate medium by which human beings ought to get up their steam. Tim roared out, hurling an awakening nut-shell at the toast-and-water coloured bonnet—"Turn out them ere pigs—this here is a *temperance* meeting; and nobody aint allowed to go the whole swine here."

The sleeping beauty thus rudely awakened, the meeting suddenly broke up in great confusion, amid cries of "Turn him out!"

While the chairman perceiving who the culprit was, cried out with stentorian sternness, "Tim!"

"All right, guvnor!" hiccupped that individual—"I'll keep a rubbing on em down, while you's a vatering on em; only I spose, as that ere bald-faced mare yonder, with the toas-an-vater blinkers, and young pigs, don't vant no hother litter."

As soon as the crowd had dispersed, and Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had given orders to have his groom taken care of by being put into the stable with his horse, he told the waiter to call a Hansom, and thinking he had sacrificed himself quite enough for one morning to patriotism and philanthropy, resolved upon devoting the rest of the day to politics and philanthropy: so first returning home to change his dress, he afterwards called upon Benaraby, and "the happy pair!" went together to Kensington Gardens.

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION VII.

"How long will this people provoke me?"—Num. xiv. 11.

—————"much I wis
To the annoyance of King Amasis."

THERE was a perfect *émeute* of carriages in Park Lane, for there was a great dinner at the Duchess of Diplomat's; Mr. Benaraby was arranging his ambrosial ringlets in the hall, where another personage was also performing the same little *prévenances*, for an infant imperial, which he was evidently educating with the greatest care; while a phalanx of footmen, and a detachment of servants out of livery, "stood at ease," on either side. Mr. Benaraby was the first to complete his capillary arrangements; and then giving his mane a final toss, like a lion (as he was), he raised his eye-glass to the hero of the tuft.

"Hellow, old fellow!" cried the latter,— "that is coming it rather too strong, to affect not to know *me*!"

"'Pon my soul, my dear Trevylian," rejoined the other, leisurely continuing his scrutiny, "I really did not know you at first, with that little addition to your family; I actually took you for *Young-Chin* (young chin), that tyrannous Emperor of China, who somewhere about 1722 or 1723, summarily put an end to religious disputations and innovations in the celestial empire, by banishing the newly-baptised Pagans, right and left: so that as your own enemy (which so many men are), you see

in your *rôle* of persecuted primitive Christian, you'd have had to send yourself to the right-about too ; with nothing but your disconsolate dandyism to fall back upon ; a larger allowance, however, than most exiles can boast of."

"Come, come, Master Ben, two can play at that game ; there is a plentiful crop of oriental revolutions just now ; even the Caucasians are up in arms ! and want a leader, and of *course* they naturally look to *you* as the coming man ; egad ! *there's* a glorious opening for you ! and after you had eventually invaded and conquered England—as you also of *course* would—think what a devilish snug berth you'd have of it, with a restoration of close boroughs, Caucasian close boroughs, and Mosaic-Arab constituencies ! and a Dean and Chapter at Memphis ! But I say, my dear fellow, don't you mean to reply to that fiery-tailed pamphlet of Mr. Jasper Mount Athos's, called—"The Omnipresence of the Deity," in which he *proves* you to be Lucifer, Anti-Christ, and I believe Nebuchadnezzar, rolled into one."

"No, no," said Benaraby, shrugging his shoulders, and plunging both his hands into the remotest depths of his trousers pockets ; for as the fixed purpose of his life was to fill them, he wisely endeavoured to inure them to habits of repletion. "No, it is not worth while ; for after all, he has not used me more scurvily than he has done the Deity, and if the Almighty don't choose to resent it, neither shall I !"

Having thus modestly placed himself in juxtaposition with Omnipotence, the pair, accompanied by a laugh from Trevylian, reached the first ante-room.

"I suppose," said Benaraby, turning to the Groom of the Chambers, "the duchess is not down yet ?"

"Yes, Sir, her grace is in the drawing-room."

"Anybody else come ?"

"Only Mr. and Lady Barbara Farrington, and Lord Ernest Clare, Sir."

"Is it a large party ?"

"Covers are laid for two-and-twenty; but Lord Redby dines here, Sir."

This was a most satisfactory hearing to Mr. Benaraby : Lord Redby being the leader towards whom his political vane had last veered, and whose coming into office he was looking forward to, as the great stepping-stone of his own fortunes. The peer, up to a certain point, had responded sympathetically to his overtures; for there is a duality in all statesmen, *expediency* being the boundary line which divides the honourable, high-minded, and nicely conscientious GENTLEMAN, from the unscrupulous, wary, *coûte-qui-coûte* politician, who is too good a craftsman to find fault with even the worst tools : yet, though Lord Redby duly appreciated Mr. Benaraby's talents, he was well aware that, as Burke said of Charles Townshend, Benaraby "conformed exactly to the temper of the House; and he seemed to *guide it*, because he was always sure to *follow it*." Lord Redby also knew, that like this *çi devant* Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Benaraby was likewise "a candidate for contradictory honours; and his great aim was to make those agree in admiration of *him*, who never agreed in anything else."

* * For his capacities were all of the ready, active, practical, bustling, hard-working order, amalgamated in the brazen mortar of unblushing impudence, which is in legislative warfare what solid squares are in physical battles. Lord Redby yet winced under the total want of principle of the man, for he foresaw in it a two-edged sword, which could be quite as dexterously used AGAINST AS FOR; and though any quality not in itself low, when pushed by indomitable courage and perseverance to an extreme, amounts almost to genius; on the other hand even the most exalted genius is easily dragged into the mire of the most contemptible baseness, when it lacks the upholding lever of moral rectitude; and Lord Redby's own intelligence was of too high an order, and his knowledge of the world far too extensive for him not to be aware, that all things in creation move in a circle, which is the reason why events, passions and

temptations, are constantly repeating themselves,—and also why consciences that are easily bought, *are as easily sold*, upon each fresh opportunity that presents itself for their rising in market value. This Lord Redby knew, and would almost have given his earldom not to have been so sure of, in the individual instance of his satellite, Mr. Isaccher Benaraby. However, it is one thing to feel the necessity of accelerating the steam of one's own political engine, against some rival parliamentary train; and another, to despise and recoil from the dust, smoke, ashes, and dirty work, by which the high pressure is achieved; and so felt Lord Redby, and therefore he patronised his willing slave of the lamp accordingly.

Upon the glad tidings that the Peer was to form one of the party that day, *en attendant* his forming a much more important and influential one in another house, Mr. Benaraby walked on with a firmer and more elastic step, till he came to the last preliminary room, where the Duchess's page drew aside the velvet *portière* for him and his companion, as Saxby, the Groom of the Chambers, preceded and announced them.

Upon a divan at one side of the fire-place, now filled by a mirror, which being only divided by the velvet-covered mantel-piece, appeared like one plate of glass continued from the ceiling downwards, sat, or rather flowed, the Duchess of Diplomat, surrounded by eider-down cushions, of all sizes, of which her ample, but at the same time undulating, and strange to say, not ungraceful dimensions seemed to form a part. The extreme languor of her manner might have occasioned a strange contrast with her robust contour, had it not harmonized with it after the fashion of a broad, deep-rolling river, whose surface is always smoother when its waters are too full to allow of their wavelets indulging in any buoyant little gambols. Some women, were they to live to turn the corner of a century, would continue to be coquettes, even when death was the only male creature left inclined to approach them: Her Grace of Diplomat was one of these, but it must be acknowledged that she possessed a

wondrous pair of eyes, which were the arsenal (as all eyes should be) of her soul's artillery; their softness was actually overwhelming, and seemed like the combined influences of music and perfume, mingling with the air of a summer's night, to give quite as much as they took, by blending with one's very being, even while they stole away the senses; their covert fires veiled, but not subdued, by the diamond tears that ever trembled in them, till they looked like two captured stars, floating in a love philtre; nor did the gentle voice discredit the imploring eyes; and decidedly if it be true that

"Le style c'est l'homme,"

it is equally so that

"La voix, c'est la femme."

Stretching out her white and sparkling hand to Benaraby, she said in her most wooing tones,

"Very kind of you to come, Mr. Benaraby. I was afraid you'd be detained at the House."

"Of all regalities," rejoined that personage, "I bow most to beauty, therefore, your Grace's invitations are commands, and you may judge of my *empressement* to obey them, by my coming so soon, for I don't think it is eight yet. This poor, persecuted Christian," added he, laying his hand on Trevylian's shoulder, and as he did so glancing slyly at Lady Barbara Farrington, the author of the *Sobriquet*, "of course keeps his 'cevennes' hours."

"And better, too, than keeping people waiting seven hours, is it not, Duchess?" drawled out the amiable dandy.

"Quite true, Cecil, but am I not to have the pleasure of seeing Lady Larpingham to-day?"

"Thank you, no, my mother is not feeling very well, and she went to Twickenham this morning. I hope the Duke is better to-day?"

"Always some original remark! from that profound young man," shrugged Benaraby, upon hearing this query, as he at

one and the same time shook hands with Lady Barbara Farrington, and Lord Ernest Clare, who both laughed, and the former added—

“Hush! take care, the Duchess will hear you.”

Probably she had done so, from the shadow of an inward smile which played round her mouth; but, just at this moment, the *portière* was again raised, and Saxby, advancing, announced to the hostess, in that subdued, well-bred tone which could not agitate the nerves of a fly—

“The Duchess of Liddesdale, your Grace, and Monsieur Charles de la Tour de Nêslé.”

This lady, though now in her forty-seventh year, was a queen-like, dignified-looking woman, still handsome enough, like *Diane de Poitiers* (whose portraits she greatly resembled), to have inspired a *grande passion*. She was the mother of the Duke of Liddesdale, who had bought Glenfern. Monsieur Charles de la Tour de Nêslé was the scion of a great French family, and an *attaché* to the French embassy, and rejoiced in the *nez retroussé*, the quick, divining eye, the vivid and electric repartee, crowned with the never-failing *mot pour rire* of an illustrious uncle of his, who, for three parts of a century, had been a celebrity in the annals of diplomacy and depravity.

The greetings between the Duchesses and he were of the most affectionate order.

“Méchant!” said the hostess, shaking her closed fan at Monsieur Charles de la Tour de Nêslé; “you never came to me on Friday, and I had really a musical phenomenon.”

“Que voulez vous, chère duchesse? cette maudite paperasse, c’est à en devenir fou! Si je ne l’étais déjà, et de la plus charmante des femmes,” concluded he, lowering his voice, and accompanying the latter part of the speech with what the Italians call a “gola lunga.”

“Flatteur!” murmured the duchess, with her soft voice, while her still softer eyes said “Merci, cher Charles.”

The remainder of the guests now began to arrive rapidly.

Among them were Mr. Lancaster, with a copious sprinkling from Downing Street, and the House of Commons bringing up the rear. Soon after, the *portière* was again raised, and Arch-deacon and Miss Panmuir were announced. Edith was looking her very loveliest, so admirably did the rich simplicity of her dress harmonize with the luxurious repose of her beauty. She wore a dress of creamy pearl white *moire antique*, the corsage drapé, à la Sevigné, with tulle illusion ; a large knot of pearls and emeralds on each shoulder and at the bosom ; also, a fourth knot fastening the upper part of the back of her dress. Round her ivory throat was a single row of large orient pearls, clasped with a large emerald, encircled with brilliants, and on her forehead, blending with, yet contrasting, the rippling gold of her plainly parted but magnificent hair, was a diadem wreath of lily of the valley, with here and there a small diamond dew-drop upon the broad green leaves that peeped out from beneath the little snowy trembling flowers.

The Duchess of Diplomat took Edith's hand within both her own, and pressing it, said :

"You must, *ma toute belle*, let me make you and a very dear friend of mine acquainted. My dear Duchess, allow me to present you my charming young friend, Miss Panmuir. Miss Panmuir, the Duchess of Liddesdale."

The latter, rising and offering her hand kindly to Edith, said : (having the delicacy, however, not to mention Glenfern) "It seems to me, Miss Panmuir, that we *ought* to know each other."

"It is very kind of your Grace to afford me such a pleasure," while, despite all her efforts to restrain them, tears for an instant filled her eyes, at the recollection of the poor old place, and the manner in which it had passed away from her and her family for ever. Her new acquaintance tried to make room for her on the divan beside her, but it was an impossible achievement, considering the overflow of the Duchess of Diplomat ; which Mr. Lancaster, who was seated at a little distance,

perceiving, rose, and advanced his chair for Edith, who bowed her thanks to him, while the Duchess of Liddesdale said, with a smile—

"I shall not even thank you, Mr. Lancaster, seeing that your place is now so much more worthily filled; and being quite convinced that you have sufficient gallantry to consider the privilege of standing by Miss Panmuir, more than a compensation for the loss of your chair."

"One so favoured in every way as Miss Panmuir," bowed Mr. Lancaster, "can never require any one to stand by her; but should such an improbable event occur, it would indeed be an enviable privilege, which I hope I should duly know how to appreciate, and to acquit myself of."

"Thanks," said Edith, "but you are aware that the present and the future, are always rivals, in more senses than one; therefore, how do you know but you may be engaging, yet, to lead a forlorn hope?"

"The motto of all such, at least, is a good one," rejoined Mr. Lancaster, in a lower and more earnest tone than the occasion seemed to warrant; "death or victory, and I shall take care not to discard it."

At this juncture of the conversation, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was announced.

"By Jove, you must look out, Master Ben, or Ferrars will beat you hollow, at your own eruptions," said Trevelyian, as the latter entered. "You, both of you, in your pyrotechnic style of dress, remind me strongly of Mr. Isaac Hawkins Brown, the hero whose volcanic silk, and lava buttons, threw the Queen of Naples into such convulsions of laughter, as to endanger the Neapolitan succession, but egad! I never saw Ferrars so extensively got up as he is to-night. What's in the wind now, I wonder?"

"Saxby!" said the Duchess of Diplomat, while Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was gliding towards her, with a step, which for stateliness might have suited the *Grand Monarque*, and a look

(as he perceived Mr. Lancaster leaning over Edith's chair) that for savageness might have embellished with a new ferocity the already by no means prepossessing physiognomy of the great mogul, as represented on the wrappers of Anglo-Saxon playing-cards, "Saxby! I'll wait a quarter of an hour for Lord Redby, and then tell Marinade he may send up dinner."

"Happy Lord Redby," repeated he, "but a man who can keep *such* a lady waiting, does not deserve any quarter."

"Happy Lord Redby!" said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, bowing almost down to the ground, as he stood before the Duchess, with one of those peculiarly disagreeable set smiles wherein some persons contrive at once to shew all their teeth, and to convey the idea that the corners of their mouth have rusty hinges.

"Have a care, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, for that sentence might do for every member of your sex, whenever they chance to fall into the hands of any of ours;" laughed the Duchess. "*A propos*, is it true that the Bouveries are separated? and whose fault is it? it always struck me that *he* was a horror! but then to be sure, I detest men of 'the wet blanket genus.'"

"I really know so little of them, that I can't say," replied Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, his cold ashy eyes fixed obliquely upon Edith all the while. "But Benaraby," added he, turning for a moment to that individual, "you know them intimately, come and report the case to the Duchess."

"Know who? report what case? there are so many cases about town, progressing *tant soit bieu*, *tant soit mal*, that if you want them reported you must get Cupid to institute a special court of amatory jurisdiction, my dear Ferrars," said he, as quitting Lady Barbara Farrington's side, he walked over to the hostess, and leant his arm upon the mantelpiece.

"I want to hear about Mr. and Mrs. Bouverie," said the Duchess; "what is the cause of their separation? Why on earth can't married people in reality live apart quietly and respectably without the *esclandre* of a public separation? but as usual in such cases, some abuse her, and others say the fault is all his; which is it?"

"I warn you, my dear Duchess," said Lady Barbara Far-
rington, "that Mr. Benaraby is a particular friend of Mrs.
Bouverie's."

"No, no," rejoined Benaraby, with one of his favourite
shrugs, his great mind disclaiming the imputed weakness of
friendship even for one of the weaker sex. "No, the cause of
the rupture is a very natural one, for though extremes are said
to meet, they are, in my opinion, much more prone to part :
and the fact is, Bouverie is a heavy, a *very* heavy body ; and
perhaps Mrs. Bouverie is what the profane vulgar might call
a light body."

"What Benaraby means," interposed Mr. Cæsar Coaking-
ton, who had his own peculiar reasons for not liking to hear
Mrs. Bouverie's reputation despatched at one fell swoop of his
friend's unscrupulous invective—"at least what I suppose he
means is, that a heavy or opaque body, coming in contact with
a luminous one, is apt, in the matrimonial hemisphere, as well
as in its antipodes, the celestial one, to occasion a conjugal
eclipse."

"By Ixion !" exclaimed Benaraby, levelling his glass at his
legal friend, "that fellow is so accustomed to a cloud of wit-
nesses, and to badgering them all, that we had better let judg-
ment go by default."

"In default of judgment I think you had," retorted Coak-
ington.

"I doubt," said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, somewhat *à propos*
de botte, "if since the world began, such a thing as a really
happy marriage was ever known."

"There might have been, when the world and the institu-
tion were both young," said a Mr. Fuddlefudge, a lean, damp,
looking, sharp-featured individual, in spectacles, who wrote moral
essays, of a highly immoral tendency, for a weekly paper, "but
the institution is now thoroughly worn out, and as to our social
system, what the misletoe is to the oak—a most unsightly
excrecence."

"But you forgot to add," said Cæsar Coakington, "still useful from the fact of a little orthodox love-making being permitted under its auspices at Christmas."

"Judging from Mr. Fuddlefudge's last essay in the Denouncer," said Mr. Farrington, a mild, gentlemanlike-looking man, who was himself an unexceptionable husband, "one has every reason to suppose, that he upholds and prefers unorthodox love-making *under the rose*."

"Hear! hear!" laughed Coakington.

"Really," said Benaraby solemnly; for he began to weary of having been a whole quarter of an hour in the room without having created a sensation, or excited universal attention. "I *cannot* stand by and hear that most holy and sacred of all things—marriage, vituperated; for as our friend Archdeacon Panmuir here, I am sure will tell you, it is the *only infallible* means the clergy possess of really bringing sinners to repentance!"

"And yet, judging from myself," said Mr. Farrington, looking affectionately at his wife,—(the usual criterion, by the bye, from which our judgments are deduced)—"some sinners are so hardened, that even under that awful dispensation, they never repent."

"The fact is," said Fuddlefudge, flatly, "the vows which the ceremony of marriage exacts are contrary to nature, for who on earth can, with any degree of truth, promise to love for ever!—it is perfectly incompatible with the innate inconstancy of man."

"My dear sir," cried Benaraby, "speak for yourself, but don't inculcate us all; indulge in, descant on, argue upon, analyse, and proclaim as many of your own escapades as you please. Not that to judge from your appearance—but then appearances are proverbially deceptive—one would imagine you to be afflicted with any of the vacillating *voltijements*, and flutterings of a Ballet Cupid; but be that as it may, respect, I beseech you, the fixed passions and irrevocable flirtations of others. I myself, for one, am a martyr to constancy, and look at that thirty-years'

liaison of Lady Fancourt and Lord Downington ! Germany had its Schiller to immortalize a thirty years' war ! cannot England, or at least St. James's, which is the nucleus of England, produce a genius equal to perpetuating this thirty years' flirtation ? ”

“ Not, it is to be hoped, unless he could at the same time change Downington into the Wandering Jew ; for thirty years is a sufficient spell, in all conscience,” said Trevelyian.

“ The most remarkable part of that affair,” put in Cæsar Coakington, “ is that in the whole of those thirty years, they have never had a single tiff.”

“ *C'est clair !* ” shrugged Monsieur Charles, de la Tour de Nêsle ; “ for, *au fond*, they have always been perfectly indifferent to each other ! ”

“ Then you think that mutual indifference is the only guarantee for the duration of a *grande passion* ? ” asked Benaraby, with a look of intense inquiry, as if he was really anxiously seeking for information.

“ *Pas de doute*,” again shrugged the *attaché*.

“ Ah ! I see,” laughed Cæsar Coakington ; “ this is the homœopathic improvement upon Mrs. Malaprop's stronger matrimonial dose, of beginning with a little aversion.”

“ The only rational aversion is to steer clear of it altogether,” croaked Fuddlefudge. “ Women are badly brought up, there is not sufficient Orientalism in their training ; they have an idea that they have a *right* to their husbands' affections,* forgetting that what a man may bear with, and even like in a young and pretty woman, becomes insupportable in the prosings of a middle-aged lady.”

“ You appear, in your code matrimonial, or rather anti-matrimonial,” said Mr. Lancaster, “ quite to forget to make any provision for the defence of the poor lady being bored by the prosings, or it may be the somethings worse, of a middle-aged

* This and what follows is word for word the printed and published sentiments of a modern reviewer.

gentleman, or his fancying that *he has a right to her affections, and exclusive devotion!*"

"Well hit! Lancaster," cried Mr. Farrington; while Fuddle-fudge merely opened wide his lack-lustre eyes, and cast a dense yellowish fungus sort of look of unaffected surprise at him over his spectacles.

Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, who had not only reciprocated the reviewer's sentiments touching the brutalization of women, but who had written a sort of whipper-in confirmatory article to them at the time, now took especial care to eschew the subject; and getting gradually nearer to Edith, upon whom his glaring looks of resentment, at Mr. Lancaster's proximity to her had not only been thrown away, but had caused her cheek to suffuse with a deep but transient blush of indignation, approached her with his most deferential manner, and said in his softest voice—

"I don't know that I ought to allow myself the happiness of coming so near to Miss Panmuir, for I have lately been much by the couch of a poor young friend, who is dying of consumption, and some persons consider that fatal malady as infectious, though I cannot say that I do."

But instead of recoiling from him, this rather (as he foresaw it would) drew Edith towards him; and there was such an expression of tenderness and genuine sympathy in her eyes, as she condoled with him upon the illness of his friend, that if he could have set it all down, or even half of it, to his own account, he might have almost brooked the presence of Mr. Lancaster; who, albeit, perfectly unconscious of the bitter hatred he had inspired, said in the kindest manner—

"There has been a new discovery for the cure of consumption: inhaling the fumes of a sugar manufactory is found to do wonders for the lungs; and an American physician, Dr. Cartwright, has turned his whole attention towards obtaining a concentrated essence of it, which is said to be perfectly miraculous in all pulmonary complaints."

"Oh, indeed!"—with a stiff and constrained bow, and an

almost fiendish expression of face—was the only reply Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars vouchsafed to this kind suggestion. Edith perceived it, and turned with undisguised disgust from him to Mr. Lancaster; complimenting the latter a little more, than but for Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' insulting manner she otherwise would have done, about his general and unostentatious information upon all subjects. Had she compelled him to swallow the contents of a chalice filled with wormwood, the clever man could scarcely have found the potion more bitter, than this proceeding of hers; and so fearfully was his countenance changed by the storm of conflicting passions raging within him at that moment, that there was something almost appalling in his appearance.

"Why, Ferrars! what's the matter? I don't know on earth what you look like!" said Trevelyian, coming up to him.

The other, feeling the ridicule of anything approaching to a scene in such a place, made a great effort to rally, and replied with one of his usual measured and sardonic smiles—

"Look like! Why, I should think like Borak, the ass that conveyed Mahomet to the seventh heaven!"

Edith heard the words, and understood their meaning, and therefore studiously kept her face turned from him; calling Mr. Lancaster's attention to the beautiful little Bohemian censer lamps in each corner of the room, with their chains of growing flowers and draperies of the same flowing over them, as if flying from the ardent gaze of the bright light within.

"They *are* very pretty," said he, "one might, without being a hyperborean, almost fancy oneself in the Temple of the Dorian sun-god, with all his altars laden with fresh floral offerings."

Here Lord Redby was announced, and soon after him, "Dinner."

Whereupon Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars folded his arms and ground his teeth; while Mr. Lancaster offered his arm to Edith, which she accepted, his rival having, like most persons in the sulks, punished no one but himself.

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION VIII.

"I have loved thee, with an everlasting love."—*Jer. xxx. 2.*

"Sits up till midnight with his host,
Talks politics, and gives the toast;
Knows every prince in Europe's face,
Flies like a squib from place to place,
And travels not, but runs a race."

Dean Swift's "Mordanto."

"Prætors, proconsuls to their provinces,
Hasting or on return, in robes of state,
Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power,
Regions and cohorts, turms of horse, and wings,
Or embassies from regions far remote."

Milton.

POLITICIANS are like lovers, only with the *love left out*—inasmuch as that they find out a way where others would not even perceive an opening; and Lord Redby—who was evidently in high spirits—contrived, as he passed Benaraby on his way, to take the Duchess of Diplomat down to dinner, to say to him with no more expression in his face than if he had been making the obligato inquiries after that gentleman's health—

"Mr. Benaraby, I shall be glad to speak with you to-night; no matter how late; if you will have the goodness to come to my house."

Benaraby merely bowed his assent, as the peer passed on, though he felt much more inclined to bound with delight, for now he was convinced that the powerful idol of his life-long

dream, unlike that of Nebuchadnezzar's, would no longer escape him, but was about to have, and what was still better, to *give him*, "a local habitation, and a name!" and this he wanted no second Daniel to discover for him.

"There is a tide in the affairs of" *dinners* as there is in those of men: and this of the Duchess of Diplomat's happened to be a singularly successful one, for *nearly* everybody seemed to be happy in their own way.

Mr. Benaraby detonated into a fine strain of hyperbolic orientalism about the luxuriance of the fruits and flowers on the table; while Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, on the opposite side, spleenetically exploded upon the barbarism of this Russian custom of exciting the olfactory nerves with such *suave* and entrancing odours, which he averred to be highly detrimental to the digestive organs during dinner. And so it is that all men go through the world, either with a smoked glass in their "mind's eye," which causes them to see an eclipse in the sun itself, like Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars; or with a golden-tinted Claude medium, like Mr. Benaraby, which turns even the murkiest twilight into sunshine, and thus makes them ever discover bright prospects "looming in the future;" and, verily, this latter is the wisest folly of the two.

"Pray," said Lady Barbara Farrington to that gentleman, whom she sat next—"have you seen Lady Mabel Malden since Mr. Malden's death? Does she receive yet?"

"Yes; I went there on Sunday. I was anxious, as a matter of philosophical research, to see how she bore the loss of such a bore. She has a great mind, that woman, for she always seems to act on the *adversus major, par secundus* system; and therefore she did not appear indecorously buoyant, although she looked hugely handsome in her weeds; but then, to be sure, some people take both marriage and the small-pox so favourably, that neither leave the slightest traces of disfigurement, and when in the former epidemic the virus, alias the husband or the wife, dies away quickly, the malady, fearful as it is, rather em-

bellishes than otherwise ; but Lady Mabel, as she married for the golden eggs, has been, as Carlo Dials would say, particularly fortunate in *cooking her goose* so soon ; though two years of Malden must have been the very quintessence—the perfect prussic acid of boredom !—quite equivalent to a twenty or thirty years' dose of ordinary bore, in its usually diluted form."

"I suppose," laughed Lady Barbara, "that her stepson, Malden *fits*, is not *au désespoir* at coming into possession of his father's coffers ?"

"Now it so happened, that the present representative of the Maldens, from his great influence (which in England always means his great wealth), was to be duly wooed into the Redby phalanx ; consequently, Mr. Benaraby's cue was to deal with him as tenderly, and to *ménager* this young gentleman's Tom-Noddyism as gingerly as an elephant bows his trunk to exalt and dandle, with colossal friendliness, some poor little Lilliputian puppy-dog, whom the keeper has obtruded on his august attention for public and popular purposes, therefore he replied to this query :—

"No, no, my dear Lady Barbara, I think he *feels* his father's death very much ; but then, you know, the Anglo-Saxon tariff, *conventionalism is everything* in England, and Englishmen—aye, and for that matter, Englishwomen, too—are as much ashamed of being detected in any outward and visible signs of feeling as they would be at being caught in the act of petty larceny, and invariably do as much to *disown* 'the soft impeachment' as the virgin queen did to refute the *Duc D'Anjou's* accusation of her having the evil in her ankles, by dancing herself nearly to death at the Marquis of Northampton's wedding—all Sunday, though it was. So much for her Protestantism ! when her vanity was hit on the raw."

And here Mr. Benaraby launched off into a fine philosophical inundation upon the 'manners and customs of the English,' which showed him to be

"Profoundly skilled in analytic."

It being a favourite "short turn" of his to interlard his frivolities with *maximic* gems of thought—doubtless upon the same principle that Alexander the Great, in his Indian campaign, caused costly suits of armour, of gigantic dimensions, to be buried in the sands, so that, upon being excavated by those who came after, *he* and his Macedonians might pass for men of gigantic stature.

Lord Redby, who sat opposite to him, his eyes upon his plate, and his whole attention *apparently* devoted to a *poulet à la ravigote*, kept his *ears* fixed upon his ministerial Mephistophiles; of whose deep, mellow, perfectly modulated voice he did not lose a single tone; and of the electric fluid of whose countenance he, through the same medium, noted every variation, as it alternated

"From grave to gay, from lively to severe."

And he thought as he did so, "If that fellow, with his *puissance du regard*, his wonderful high-pressure powers of declamation, and his sublimated hypermetric impudence! can lure on into proselytism by his verbal *Ignus fatui*, that really clever woman, Lady Barbara Farrington, what a dance he *will* lead the masses; and, still more, *them asses* in the House of Commons; and so pleased was he with the thought that he held up his glass, and sinking the *mister*, in his determination to raise the *man*, said across the table—"Benaraby, a glass of champagne with you."

"*Et tu quoque Brute!*" said Trevelylian, who sat within one of Lord Redby, for he was a Whig *renfoncé* by descent, by indolence, and by inclination. "Has your lordship, then, *no* mercy; for poor Benaraby is already *pledged* to death by his constituents?"

"Mr. Benaraby," said the Duchess of Diplomat, trying to dart a look at him through the interstices of the plateau; for whenever any political "Hamlet" was enacted at her house she always played the Ghost, and stood between the *dramatis personæ*, at the exact and critical moment.

"Mr. Benaraby, I have a crow to pluck with you, for you promised to give me the original score of Prince Joseph Poniatowski's opera of 'Malek Adhel,' and you never did so."

"Injustice!—thy name is woman!" exclaimed Benaraby. "Can your grace command, and *I* not obey? I left it some four days ago, with what Mr. Thomas Carlyle, that great Gramscian Germanic growler, would call 'that fine specimen of opaque flunkeyism grown truculent, your porter.'"

"That's a truculence that must be seen to and tamed," laughed the Duchess.

"It was doubtless for that laudable purpose," rejoined Benaraby, "that he kept the score; for 'music,' we know, 'hath power to soothe the savage breast.' I thought from the transient glimpse I caught of him on my arrival, that he looked subdued to-day; in short, that there was less of the flunkey and more of the *finatico* about him; but ere I depart to-night, I'll argue the point of his delinquency with him, syllogistically, Socratically, and Pythagorically, till I convince him that his conduct has been base in the extreme, and that though thorough-bass is the requisite foundation for a musician, it is the worst of all possible ingredients in porter—whether that porter be stout in a bottle, or double stout in a chair."

While Mr. Benaraby was thus rigmaroling in his usual fine-flowing, grandiloquent, semi-hieroglyphical, semi-hyperbolic style, his friend Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was in the contrary extreme—in a state of physical stagnation, and most mortifying and unusual anti-showoffativeness. Not at all relishing the goods—or rather bads—with which the gods had provided him in the shape of an antiquated—nay, an almost fossilised specimen of the vestal genus, in the person of a Miss De la Zouche, a *çi devant* maid of honour to Queen Charlotte.

She was in every respect a curious sample of a now extinct race. Some old ladies, themselves perfect oral traditions, who had known her in her palmy days—when Bath *was* Bath, and the spirit of Beau Nash seemed still to flirt every fan, and to

fan every flirt—declared she was a perfect enamel. If so, it was most assuredly one of *Bones*—for she was all bones—bones, too, which time had not bleached, but which looked red and raw; and no wonder, for they were not veiled by the slightest segment of flesh, to protect them against all those insubordinate atmospheric changes in which our charming climate abounds. Rattling over the ruts of her neck, and occasionally rolling into its deep ravines, were two rows of fine pear-shaped pearls, fastened with a large diamond *solitaire*, surrounded by sapphires, and a sort of black velvet hatchment under it, for the better display of its brilliancy, by the force of contrast. Her head shook with that tremulous motion which is so graceful in those wire-supported flowers—that *Natier* mounts, but not equally so in human *caputs*;—and upon it rose high and majestically a sort of model of the Tower of Babel, in white and cherry-coloured gauze, supported by innumerable jewelled-headed corking pins. Indeed, with such a profusion of precious stones was she tessellated, that,—being guilty of the only crime for which English society has no toleration, namely, *POVERTY*—the ill-natured, who of course consisted of her particular friends, were wont to say of her (as Madame de Sevigné did of the two Mancini) that she had “*force pierreries, et très peu de linge* ;” not so much in the latter instance in allusion to her nude drapery, as to her literal deficit of those garments which take precedence in every toilet.

What considerably enhanced Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' uncomfortable position next Miss De la Zouche was, that she did not seem to have the most purblind glimmering of his celebrity in a literary point of view. She knew, indeed, that he was an *author*, but she seemed totally to ignore that he was what is far from being synonymous also, a *personnage* ; on the contrary, having understood that he had appeared in print, and was about to do so again, she thought his literary system might want regulating, and therefore she continued during dinner to pound for him in the brazen mortar of her reminiscences, strong tonics

of Dr. Johnson, and to dilute emollients of Miss Burney, with conserves of the same, as Madame D'Arblay ; till his lacerated vanity almost became rabid ;—and had he not bridled it with the strong muzzle of contempt, he would infallibly have ended by demolishing the Tower of Babel, or by tearing off the splendid pearls that mocked the skeleton throat beside him, and flinging them amidst the swinish multitude around. But the culminating billet of his martyrdom was seeing Edith opposite, radiant in beauty, with a halo of happiness suffusing her whole countenance, as she listened with the most profound attention to Mr. Lancaster's conversation ; who, independent of his great personal beauty, was gradually but rapidly beginning to interest her heart, far more than Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had ever interested her *imagination*. Even now the pyre was not sufficiently high, for Miss De la Zouche, with that singular proficiency in the *mal à propos*, for which most old ladies are so celebrated, all in sending a large black grape out of some Maraschino jelly that she was eating, hopping like a spent cannon ball into the most vulnerable, alias the most visible part of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' shirt frills. She, to make the wound more mortal, observed—

“What a very charming young man Mr. Lancaster is !—so clever, so accomplished, models so beautifully, sings so charmingly, and writes, I hear, exquisite poetry—in short, he is quite the Duchess of Diplomat's pet lion this season !”

“Ah !” said her companion, with one of his sardonic grins, and showing all his long and very carnivorous teeth, as he glared across the table in fixed audacity at Mr. Lancaster ; “and nearly the same name, too, as Caracalla's pet beast ; for his was called Acinax ; and judging from appearances, I should say the Duchess's favourite ought to be called ASININE !”

The hostess, who, as well as all who were at that immediate end of the table, overheard this gross and unprovokedly insolent speech, trembling lest the object of it should do so likewise, said to him across the table, as she caught a fragment of what he was saying to Edith,—

"What! defending Nero and Caligula, Mr. Lancaster? I know you to be charity itself in all your judgments; but I must say, bestowing it upon two such monsters is literary charity thrown away."

"I was not exactly defending them, Duchess," smiled Mr. Lancaster; "I was merely maintaining that no man was uniformly and unexceptionably bad; that even the worst had some *one* redeeming point, as in *all* natures, including the most abased, the saving grace of LOVE was to be found; and I instanced Caligula's devotion to Cæsonia, and Nero's infatuation about Poppæa."

"Nero!" cried Benaraby, in a kind of ecstatic enthusiasm—throwing himself back in his chair, and folding his arms, as was his wont when he clung to the tail of another person's argument, and determined to ride home upon it without drawing bridle—"Nero! the greatest benefactor to mankind that has ever yet dawned upon the world!" Here there was a universal pause of astonishment; which was precisely the point for which Mr. Benaraby always steered; while, for a moment, Lord Redby looked at him with an uncomfortable dubious expression, as much as to say—

"Surely he'll never, even under the influence of claret and conceit, be such an ass as to deal out in *this* house—the stronghold of whiggism!—any of his double-distilled conservative theories about the salutary effects of autocratic despotism."

But soon the peer's mind was relieved, by his satellite adding, for the edification of his breathless auditory, as he threw his eyes up to the ceiling with a look of proud defiance, as if challenging Jove himself—

"*The very greatest!* Talk of Howard the philanthropist—a mere opaque, well-meaning old gentleman, who, though he did not actually go the length of

"Taking the *prisoned soul*, and lapping it in elysium,"

yet from visiting afflicted souls in prison, did in some sort console the poor wretches in *hot water*: yet, what was that com-

pared with Nero's boon to the world ; for, according to Pliny, he was the first who invented the glorious art of iceing water. Here's to him," added he, pouring out a goblet of that cold sparkling fluid, "and may he in return for all his deeds on earth, never *get a drop too much* where he now is."

"Bravo! old fellow," cried Trevylian, amid the universal laughter with which this very unusual toast was received.

The earnest, yet studiously *piano* manner in which he had drunk the monster memory of the defunct tyrant gave to the burlesque a double impetus ; and as soon as the laugh it had caused had subsided, Mr. Benaraby leant forward and said, in hopes of being questioned about the Egyptian Magi, and the Seers of Cairo, in which he was well up—

"Were *you* the witch, Miss Panmuir, or was Mr. Lancaster the wizard, who evoked the shade of that great man, Nero ; or were you merely his Tyro and accomplice in the business ?"

"Not even that, Mr. Benaraby," laughed Edith, "for *you* are the real culprit, being the only person who ever attempted to *raise* Nero, by citing him as the author of a single benefit to the world."

"Ah!" said Benaraby, caressing his chin, "faggots are *nil*, and horseponds afar off, which makes you courageous, Miss Panmuir, and like all witches—Lancashire or other—you try to lay the blame of your sorceries upon your innocent victims, of which great legion I stand foremost," concluded he, with a low bow.

"Well, but," laughed the hostess, "as you are so deeply versed in all the necromantic spells of the East, Mr. Benaraby, you ought, in summing up your accusation against Miss Panmuir, proclaim what philtres and charms she has used in the incantation."

"I am for the French plan of *des circonstances atténuées*, for all crimes, especially for the most heinous ; for the worse they are, the more extenuation they require, therefore I withdraw the count of philtres," replied Benaraby, "but the fatal

effects of the *charms* of the accused, not one of the witnesses here present, I am sure, will attempt to deny."

"There! *ma belle enfant*," said the Duchess of Diplomat to Edith, with a laugh, as she rose from the table, "decidedly

'The force of *compliment* can no farther go,'

so we had better go instead."

As Lord Redby opened the door for the egress of the two Duchesses and the rest of the ladies, a slight frown knit the brows of Monsieur Charles de la Tour-de-Nesle, who had been trying surreptitiously to take a sketch of Edith on the back of his *ménu du dîner*; "*j'ai attrappé le traits, mais non le regard*," said he pettishly, as Trevylian, who sat next him, glanced obliquely at his *croquis*.

"My dear fellow," said the latter, *sotto voce*, "allow me to tell you in plain English that you are not likely to obtain the *regard* of any woman, as long as you steal their effigy at a dinner-table, and display its *pro bono* afterwards, or even to catch *their expression*, beyond that of contempt."

"*Vous croyez?*" replied the *Attaché*, looking at him over his shoulder, as if the French *élégant* was measuring fatuity with the English dandy, as a necessary preliminary to entering into any farther encounter.

But the ladies having left them to an Englishman's only paradise—namely, the society of other men, politics, and plenty of wine, we will not intrude upon the mysteries of their barbaric Elysium, but follow the inferior animals up-stairs.

The Duchess of Liddesdale asked Edith if she would kindly consider that she had called upon her, which she would take the earliest opportunity of doing; and waiving ceremony come and dine with her the next day *en petit comité?*" adding "I shall be most happy to see Mrs. Dunbar, and the Archdeacon too, if they will not be shocked at my unceremonious proceedings; but the fact is, I have been so much out of England, my dear Miss Panmuir, in countries where people have only two

very primitive aims in living, those of pleasing their friends and pleasing themselves, that I *cannot* get into our *guindé* steel and whalebone conventionalities, the grand principle of which appears to me to be the constant effort to avoid anything like the escape of one natural feeling, or emotion, till we end by having none to suppress; and making a North Pole of our sympathies; through whose icy blocks no passage can be discovered."

Edith accepted this invitation as cordially and frankly as it was given. She was not sure about Mrs. Dunbar, as she seldom went out; but she knew she was not exceeding a little of the truth, in vouching for the alacrity with which the Archdeacon would also avail himself of it.

The rooms now began to fill rapidly with the Duchess of Diplomat's evening guests, composed of the *corps diplomatique et de la crème de la crème* of all nations; and *panaché*, (as Monsieur de la Tour de Nèfle was wont to express it), "*D'artistes distingué*."

Amongst the earliest arrivals, was a little woman, with very denuded bones, conventionally called a neck and shoulders, and a perfect Cretan labyrinth of hay-colored ringlets; for she could not lay claim to being that peculiar phase of beauty (and also one of its loveliest) which the Italians call a *Biondina*. She was a Mrs. Piers Moncton, the wife of the second son of Sir Piers Moncton—that eccentric self-expatriated Sir Piers Moncton—Edith's distant relation, who, upon coming into possession of Glenfern, had so summarily disposed of it. This lady, who cleverly managed to combine the seemingly two incompatible extremes of being at the same time over-dressed and not dressed at all, now made her way to the hostess, whose toady-in-chief she was.

"My dear Dutchessth, it is useless to waste words in asking you how you are, you look tho charmingly," lisped she.

"And you so alarmingly, my dear Matty; you seem to have gone mad upon Boileau's assertion: 'Que rien n'est beau que levrai, et certes, tout ce qui est vrai, n'est pas nécessairement

beau, comme vous nous faites voir ;' and half-a-crown's worth of gauze, aurait mieux fait votre affaire. But have you got a governess yet ? ”

“ Oh yeth, thuch a thuperior perthion, a Fraulein Göthekant, who hath been throngly recommended to me by Mithter Ponthonby Ferrars ; tho that I think mythelf very fortunate ; for you know in all hith bookth he sayth tho much about female education, and raithing the moral standard of it for women, tho ath to elevate their characterth.”

“ And, in order to raise it, he logically thinks it must first be lowered, I suppose,” said the Duchess of Liddesdale. “ I confess I should pause, were I you, my dear Mrs. Moncton, before I confided so sacred a trust as the education of my children to a governess of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars’ recommendation.”

“ You amathe me ! my dear Ducheth ; for Mr. Ponthonby Ferrars ith tho clever, that I assure you I feel quite proud and elated at hith condethending to interetht himthelf about my nurthery arrangementh.”

“ Well, it’s to be hoped that that pride won’t have a fall,” sotto voced the Duchess of Liddesdale ; but this soliloquy was not uttered in so low a voice as to prevent Edith hearing every word of it ; which made a painful, though perhaps a salutary impression upon her, as confirmatory of Alciphron Murray’s opinion of the subject of it.

“ Ecco ! ” exclaimed the hostess to Mrs. Moncton, “ that moving mountain Soto Mayor,” as she looked towards a corpulent Spanish Condé, who was rolling on towards them, like the tide of events, through every obstacle ; sending glances from his large languishing black eyes in all directions ; for, in his eyes, all the sentiment denied to the rest of his physique had taken refuge.

“ On dit, Matty,” continued her Grace, “ that our fat friend is au dernier mieux with you ; if so, it only shows what a fatality there must be in these sort of things.”

"*Gare les mauvaises langues*, my dear Dutcheth," minauded the little woman, shaking her hay-coloured ringlets. "I cannot help hith thending me flowerth every morning; but I alwayth tell *Eugénie* to put hith notes in the fire, and hith flow-ers in water."

"So that you are determined to make the poor man go through fire and water for you! *vous netes pas dégoutée!*" laughed the Duchess.

The huge Hidalgo had at length succeeded in mooring himself alongside the hostess, and bowing profoundly to her, kept up a fire of glances the while at Mrs. Moncton, who returned them over her magnificent bouquet—the Condé's last offering—which she kept before her mouth, in the most co-quetish and conspicuous manner. As this is a world whose human mosaic is composed of strong—either ludicrous or painful—contrasts, so the Condé de Soto Mayor was followed by what never could have passed for even *his* shadow; so painfully and spirally elongated was it. This locomotive attenuation was "commonly called," as the letters-patent have it, Lord Menelaus Plagiary. His wife, without being a Helen, had ran away from him; so that from the Heaven of Love, he had fallen into the Slough of Despond of Literature; but being, politically speaking, a staunch Peelite, he carried into the republic of letters, the mercantile mesmerism of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest; which he contrived to do, by subscribing to Hookham's, who supplied him with "all *the* new and popular works," as the catalogue promises and vows to do. And so smoothing the wings of his "blighted and darkened spirit," as "gents" behind counters phrase it; whose highly developed organizations are equally imbued with Byron and Birmingham; he then and there, amid that box of books, the scissors for his Mentor, and the paste-brush for his Ulysses, snatched, amid this printed isle of Calypso, now a thought here, then a page there, and then again somewhat dishonourably noted down whole conversations; all

of which he shook together, blended with a slight, and very thinly diluted quantum of original nonsense of his own ; which he then spread, plain and unvarnished, over three volumes of blank paper, which he forthwith sold to a fashionable publisher as "Lord Menelaus Plagiary's" new novel ; and from whom he got a good price for this *Sautée de Cervelles* : these gentry, like Pope's "gentle belle," never being able to "resist a lord !"

To avoid having to compliment Lord Menelaus upon his tessellated "Tale," all the choice specimens of which she had already seen in their original quarries, the hostess telegraphed to a *Prima Donna*, who, like

"Linked sweetness long drawn out,"

was passing on, arm-in-arm, with the Baritone, to have a little *entre acte* flirtation in the conservatory previous to her *grande scène* for the evening.

However, as in our sensible age all sorts of love generally gives place to any sort of lucre, the *Diva*, at the Duchess's command, changed her course, and proceeded to the pianoforte, where, having deposited her gloves and bouquet, and made sundry little superfluous arrangements about her *Bérthe*, during the few seconds that the *Maestro* who was to accompany her burst over the instrument in a preliminary storm of harmonious discords,—she then gave some gems from "Beatrice di Tenda," and the "Favorita," which effectually summoned the choice spirits from "the vasty deep" of the dining-room. Mr. Lancaster and Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars entered almost simultaneously, though by different doors ; and the Duchess of Liddesdale having made a signal to the former, with her fan, in order to ask him to dine with her on the morrow, he found himself, to his no small satisfaction, again by Edith's side. Upon perceiving this, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was almost rabid with rage and disappointment, as he stood contemplating them, his elbow leaning on the mantelpiece, to the imminent peril of a costly and

colossal Capo de Monte vase; while Sallust himself would have failed in describing the horrible charnel expression of his *fædi oculi*,—of which “flabby-looking eye” would perhaps be a nearer translation, even than “unhealthy looking,” as serpent-like it seemed to be sliming over its victim previous to destroying it. How different was the buoyant, earth-spurning step! the fine Promethean dare-the-gods, scale-heaven air, with which Mr. Benaraby seemed to draw the stubborn bolt of the world’s power vigorously towards him, and then shoot his own spirit swiftly on before the somewhat grotesque body that was but its framework. As he entered those brilliant and now densely-crowded rooms, flinging his snowy handkerchief in one direction, his raven locks in another, and his scintillating glances,—those Ethiopian ambassadors in all—

“Oh! Mr. Benaraby,” said the hostess, “you are the very person that I wanted; for I know no leveller and accomplisher of impossibilities but you,—and I have a nice little insurmountable one, that I want you to get over for me.”

After the preliminary of a profound bow for this hyperbolic compliment, the personage thus addressed, plunging his hands into his trouser pockets, and elevating his shoulders into what is commonly called a shrug, said with his usual modesty—“Well, perhaps I *do* possess the same little talent which a contemporary writer tersely and truly attributes to Napoleon the First—that of creating conditions which are inexhaustible,—which every Pioneer of what ordinary men call ‘impossibilities’ does.”

“Then, by Jove!” said Lord Ernest Clare aside to Mr. Farington, “he must have created his own impudence! for I know of no condition more inexhaustible.”

“But what is the little bramble that dares to obstruct your path, belle duchesse?” added Benaraby. “Is it possible that the dull earth can evince less gratitude towards you than to’rds Io?—and send forth anything less soft and less fragrant than violets, in return for the pressure of those lovely feet? But if

so, you have only to command the axe of my indomitable WILL, to clear away the obstacle, be it what it may!"

"Quant à cela!" laughed the Duchess, "it does not amount to anything quite so formidable as a wrestle with the Fates!—still, the achievement I require at your hands is difficult enough in all conscience; nothing less than to erect a superstructure without a foundation."

"Nothing easier, you mean; for do not most of us, despite the disillusioning (to coin a word) inroads of utilitarianism, pass our lives in the study of that peculiar kind of aerial architecture, called castle-building?" said Benaraby.

"Yes, for ourselves, but not for our neighbours; and as for those horrid utilitarians, had they the power of remodelling the creation, which, thank heaven, they have not, I verily believe they would erase the stars from the skies and the flowers from the earth, merely because their utility is filtered through the beautiful."

"Take care, Duchess; speak more respectfully of those scavengers of political economy—the utilitarians; or you will have to run a tilt with your protégé, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, who is one of their chief commissioners," said Lord Ernest Clare.

"Ah!" rejoined the lady, languidly, "he is a great logician, is he not? All syllogisms, and sequences, and that sort of thing?"

"Being a mass of contradictions," said Mr. Farrington, "*perhaps* he may even be a good logician; otherwise I should doubt the fact, as I don't see how a man, always moving in what logicians call a *vicious circle*, as he most unquestionably does, can ever be logical!"

It might be that Mr. Benaraby thought there was something decidedly personal in this allusion of Mr. Farrington's to his *friend* (!) Ponsonby Ferrars' vicious circle; so, throwing back his mane with considerable hauteur, and sprinkling, as it were, the last speaker with a contemptuous look, hurled in the flash of a side-glance from his meteoric eyes, he said to the Duchess of Diplomat, in his blandest tone—

"How long, Duchess, is the lance of your true knight to remain in rest? I am only waiting for your colours to rush to the onslaught."

"Ah! true; I had nearly forgotten. I want you to say something civil *de ma part* to Lord Menelaus Plagiary about his book, which I really have not the face to say to him myself."

"Oh, is that all?" said Benaraby. "Well, I shall be charmed to do your spiriting, my dear Duchess; for I rather think I am an admirer of Lord Menelaus' productions."

"What! you actually carry your mania for eccentricity and originality as far as *that*?" said Lord Ernest Clare, laughing.

"Rather say, my affable imitation," rejoined Benaraby, with a sort of burlesque regality of look, as if from the height of his grandeur he had been conferring knighthood upon a city saddler; "for on this occasion, I condescend to follow the example of Voltaire, who was wont to say that he could pardon and overlook any faults of style in an author, so long as he set you thinking. Now, Lord Menelaus has this effect upon me, more than any writer of modern times, for I never open and shut—which are simultaneous movements—one of his books, without its setting me thinking what an egregious ass he is!"

Scarcely had the laugh subsided, which followed this speech, made more ludicrous by the imperturbable gravity with which it had been delivered, than seeing the subject of it making his way towards the hostess, she hastily beckoned to Mr. Lancaster, and requested him to sing something.

"Do," added she, "sing 'Suava Imagine,'—you sing that so exquisitely; or that serenade of Schubert's?"

"You must excuse me, my dear Duchess," said he, with a smile, "I never venture upon anything beyond English before foreign *artistes*; because they then charitably attribute all my deficiencies to the barbarity of our language, and the inharmonious construction of our souls; for, as the Italian proverb truly says,—'You must sing with the soul before you can sing with the voice.'"

"Would that our amateur young lady singers, whose shrill, unmodulated screams resemble those of the peacock, far more than the notes of the nightingale, could have *that* truth thoroughly impressed upon them, before they—set on by their remorseless mammas—so unmercifully split one's ears," groaned the Duchess. "But *you*, my dear Lancaster, always *do* sing with your soul: and as your soul is a great linguist, you need not be afraid to give utterance to its feelings, either in German, Italian, Spanish, French, Russian, or Romaic."

"I may not, it is true, incur so much danger from any of those tongues as from such flattery from the Duchess of Diplomats!" bowed Mr. Lancaster, as he moved on to the piano.

"If there is one thing more disgusting and degrading than another," said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, with the most exaggerated sarcasm, as he glided into Mr. Lancaster's now vacant place by Edith's side, "it is to see a man who calls himself a gentleman, converting himself into a fiddler; and playing the mountebank for the amusement of a set of people who can afford to pay professional mountebanks."

"It is evident from that," retorted Edith, with equal, but far more polished and quiet sarcasm,—for she was beginning to be both indignant and revolted at his gratuitous insults to Mr. Lancaster—"it is evident from that, that Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars is not endowed with the divine gift of music!"

"No, thank Heaven!" said he, vehemently.

"There are other things, for the absence of which one might have more reason to be grateful to Heaven—unprovoked malice for one," rejoined Edith.

Her companion bit his nether lip sharply, with a gasp, and a crimson flush for half a second lit up his ghastly cheek, like a lurid red light in the wild waste of a desolate country, glaring athwart a murky night, so as to render its darkness more terrible; and was about to reply, when the low, mellow chords of the symphony that Mr. Lancaster was now playing, arrested Edith's attention, and, putting up her finger, she said, "Hush!"

and the next moment, with one of those rich, full, exquisitely modulated voices, in whose every tone seems to kneel an impassioned persuasion, he sang the following song :—

Song.

I have woo'd thee as a thought,
I have loved thee as a dream,
Till all else became as naught—
Mere faint shadows on life's stream.

I have lived upon a look!—
A tone! a touch! a flower!
But from each and all I took
Spells of wondrous power!

For I've been with thee ever,
Tho' but as the angels are;
Who wake and watch, yet never
Leave their lone, pure sphere afar.

For not even unto *thine*
May my soul its secret tell,
Till thy spirit mirrors mine,
Like to stars within a well.

Where, hidden from all eyes,
Save those which these depths have sought,
They stereotype the skies
With bright rays from heaven caught!

"Beautiful! Charming! Bravissimo!" were echoed on all sides, as the last notes did not seem so much to die away upon the air, as to blend with it into one enduring harmony: and none were so loud in their lavish and generous applause of Mr. Lancaster's exquisite voice, as those whose own genius enabled them best to appreciate it. Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' tribute, if not equally complimentary, was, at all events, more original, for he merely muttered between his set teeth,—

"D——n the fellow!"

Edith said nothing; but every word and every tone had

sunk into her heart, and seemed to have opened a new and hitherto undreamt of vista of existence to her. The complex foreshadowings of her imagination, which Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars's highly-wrought, but cold and hollow intellectualities had for the last two years awakened and evoked, appeared now to be suddenly vivified by some mystic and divine light into realizing and completing themselves in her heart,—as we may suppose our disembodied spirits, once freed from their earthly struggle and corporeal trammels, will, in the effulgence of Heaven, at *once* achieve the perfectionized and climacteric unity and completeness of their creation, which, however they may have caught occasional glimpses of, they have in vain toiled after on earth. The nearest approach we have below to this universality and completeness of existence, is when, for the first time, intuition floods our heart with that marvellous light by which it reveals to us the great knowledge that another heart has been kindled at our own, and that we are *LOVED*! For, verily, the two hemispheres of such twin souls form one bright, unclouded firmament, which fully exemplifies the beautiful description of the Psalmist; for between such, though,—

“There is neither speech nor language,” yet “their voices are heard among them.”

Unheard and unsuspected by all others, eloquent had been the voiceless words of that mute language which had passed between Edith Panmuir and Harold Lancaster that night. Therefore, decidedly, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars's lucky star—whether Lucifer or any other—had forsaken him, when he chose so inauspicious a moment to request that she would allow him to call upon her as early as one the next morning. A disagreeable sensation came over her; she hesitated, and tremulously repeated the word—

“To-morrow?”

“Even so; there *is* a ‘to-morrow’ to all things in this world, not excepting a woman’s caprice!” rejoined her companion, in a more than usually dry and compressed manner.

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"As I seldom indulge in caprices," said Edith, with a slight, very slight tone and look of resentment, "I am not sure that I have to-morrow at my disposal."

"Miss Panmuir," resumed Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, suddenly changing the expression of his countenance and his whole bearing to one of the greatest self-abnegation, accompanied by a look of intense and unutterable despair, "there are twelve long miserable hours in the day; have you not sufficient humanity to devote half of any one of those hours to save a fellow-creature from the rack?"

There was no mistaking the purport of these words. Edith both blushed and trembled, as she stammered out—

"To-morrow, then, at one, I shall be at home."

Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars did not, in reply to this acquiescence on her part, utter one word; he merely made her a profound bow over his hat, which he seemed to hold tightly between both his hands, more, apparently, as a support to himself than to it; after which obeisance, he walked leisurely to one of the doors, and quitted the room. Mr. Lancaster looked over wistfully at the place he had vacated, without, however, making any attempt to take it. He now *knew* that Edith understood him; he *felt* that a spiritual and sacred compact had passed between them, and he dreaded lest the coarse and common-place medium of words (till he might launch them on the full tide of a love as deep as it was pure) should mar a single grace of that sublime epopee of passion, towards whose creation they had never contributed.

But Edith was not left long to the mingled pleasure and pain of her own thoughts; for the Archdeacon, who had received the Duchess of Liddesdale's invitation from her own lips, coupled with a warm eulogium upon Edith, now came fussing up to the latter, in high good-humour, as he began to think she was not such a fool after all, and had played her cards very skilfully; for there is this remarkable peculiarity about manœuvrers, which is, that they never can imagine the possibility

of any event of a favourable nature coming about simply through the intervention of Providence, or even through that of Providence's left hand—chance! Everything that occurs they invariably attribute to the tactics or preconceived plans of the individual to whom it happens; consequently, Archdeacon Panmuir gave Edith credit for an astute and recondite scheme to get into the Duchess of Liddesdale's good graces, of which she was perfectly incapable, both by capacity, inclination, and principle.

"Humph! ahem! A certain young lady is looking very well to-night!—*very* well indeed," said Samuel Panmuir, bestowing a sort of copyright migratory scrutiny from head to foot upon his fair cousin, as he accosted her.

"I don't *feel* very well, though; I've a dreadful headache; the rooms are so very hot. Would you have any objection to go, for I think it must be late?"

"Not a bad move!" said the Archdeacon, offering her his arm; "decidedly, we are improving. A beauty, whenever she becomes 'the cynosure of wondering eyes,' as, I must say, you are to-night, Edith, should always disappear at a critical moment, that her absence may be regretted and her beauty discussed."

"And her *tout ensemble* dissected," added Edith, with a weary smile.

"Now, it is very evident," continued the Archdeacon, pursuing his own train of thought as steadily as if it had never been interrupted—"plain to be seen as the dome of St. Paul's—that we have quite made the conquest of the mother, which *may* be considered as the *mezzo termine* to that of the son. So mind, my gentle coz," continued he, as they descended the stairs, in that inflated "national drama" tone which he always assumed when he meant to be particularly gallant and insinuating—"mind, I say, that when this will-o'-the-wisp of a duke *does* make his appearance, you lose no time in catching *him*."

"And how *ARE* dukes caught?" asked Edith, resuming a

fausse agnès look of the uttermost simplicity, not to say stupidity, which she planted in the very centre of the reverend gentleman's genuinely inane orbs. "Are they caught by salt being strewed upon their heads, as nursery oracles enjoin should be sprinkled on birds' tails for *their* capture; or by throwing dust in their eyes, as people catch the ophthalmia in Egypt?"

Samuel Panmuir had a vague notion, not indeed that his cousin was laughing at him—silk and lawn forbade such a sacrilegious idea!—but that she was indulging in a jest of some kind. Therefore, he replied—

"Ah! well, the mother is so stately and *penseroso*, that doubtless the son, in that spirit of contradiction which possesses all elder, and more especially all only sons, prefers the *allegro*. At all events, it is certain, that however well honey may catch flies, vinegar never can do so. Therefore, I advise you by all means to cultivate your merry mood; as you know the proverb,—'Those may laugh that win.'"

"And in case of one's *not* winning, it is wise to secure one's laugh beforehand," said Edith, as they entered the cloak-room; where Mademoiselle Natalie, the Duchess of Diplomat's *première femme de chambre*, was seized with such a paroxysm of admiration at the sight of Edith (which was both professional and profound—the former *being* for her *toilette*, and the latter for her beauty), that she let fall a whole pelion of cashmeres upon an ossa of cloaks, in order to clasp her hands for some seconds, before she had sufficiently recovered her self-possession to inquire what sort of wrap she should have the honour of looking out for *Madame La Comtesse*.

And the perfectly Parisian accent and equally Parisian grace with which Edith, in thanking Mademoiselle Natalie, described her little white Algerian striped bournouse, lined with pale green, was even more lovely in the eyes and ears of the *soubrette* than the transcendent beauty which had at first captivated her.

Lovers are *almost* a ubiquitous race, otherwise it would have been strange how Mr. Lancaster had managed to get there just

in time to put on that identical bournouse, and to hold the *bouquet*, while its owner plunged her little feet daintily shod with white satin, into a pair of small violet and silver Russian overshoes; and it would have been stranger still, but for certain mysterious affinities—the secrets of whose chemistry are known to all who love!—how the slight and almost imperceptible pressure of his hand on hers, as he returned the flowers—could have sent all the blood from her heart, thrilling up in one mighty rush to her cheeks. But never yet were two hearts busied in composing an *Odyssey* of this nature, but what the fell common-place of some harsh prosaic sound, was sure to come crashing and jarring between their harmonious strophes and anti-strophes; and now it came in the form of the stentorian voice of the hall porter, echoed by a score of lacqueys, announcing that—

“Archdeacon Panmuir’s carriage stops the way!”

“Archdeacon and Miss Panmuir coming out!” re-roared another detachment; which gave Mr. Lancaster an opportunity of offering his arm to Edith, as the Archdeacon redoubled his assiduities to his own *Paletôt*, which had a restive sleeve.

“Now my dear Edith,” said the reverend gentleman, as soon as they had turned out of Park Lane, and he had flung himself back into one corner of his luxurious Clarence—“that Mr. Lancaster is all very well, as young men go, and as he seems a huge favourite with the two Duchesses, you must be civil to him, and all that; but, take my advice, don’t encourage his attentions too much, you may be sorry for it if you do—when this slippery young Duke of Liddesdale makes his appearance. Depend upon it, old heads are wiser than young ones, and I can see further into a millstone than most people.”

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION IX.

"I press towards the mark."—*Phil.* iii. 14.

"It's well to be off with the old love
Before you are on with the new."

Old Song.

"High hopes have oftentimes hard fortunes ;
And such as hastily snatch at the branches
Are apt to stumble at the root."

WHEN Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars quitted the Duchess of Diplomat's, he dismissed his Brougham and walked, or rather shot on, into Oxford Street, where, calling a Hansom, he flung himself into it, telling the man to—

"Drive like the d——l to No. — in the Edgeware Road."

"How be I to know how *you* drives, ven I've never seed you handle the ribbons !" muttered Cabby as he scrambled into his perch, being only half awake, and not sober quite to the same extent. Next to a mail-bag, nothing in creation expedites so many hopes, fears, and conflicting passions, as hack horses, poor animals !—blessed are they even in their purgatory—that though they aid and further them all, they are not responsible for any of them, or else the poor phantom steed that now panted on towards the Edgeware Road, might have found his freight far too heavy for his ossified strength. The Hansom at length stopped at one of those two-windowed, narrow-doored brick tenements peculiar to London, and which appear to be constructed

for the express purpose of narrowing the mind and condensing vice into the most concentrated focus possible, so as to render its virus the more baneful and fatal.

Lights glared through the bare-looking white linen blinds of what was by courtesy called the drawing-room of this domiciliary band-box; and through its blotting-paper walls were distinctly heard some of Beethoven's enchanting strains upon an indifferent piano, played in a masterly manner; which, however, suddenly ceased the moment the cab stopped at the door. Before the driver had finished knocking, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had sprung to the pavement, and a sleepy and slipshod maid of all-work—her vermilion locks carefully papered in lumpy, greasy-looking packets, like superannuated maintenance cutlets round her forehead, while her face and hands were profusely black-leaded—had scarcely opened the door, ere he rushed in, flinging the cabman a shilling. "Vot's this here for! it haint my fare," said the latter, contemplating the coin the while with a sort of archæological scrutiny.

"Oh! isn't it!" cried Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, slamming the door in his face; "then the more handsome on my part; for you know handsome *is as Hansom does*;" and grinning with delight at this elegant piece of wit, which he resolved upon making a present to his friend Mr. Carlo Dials, at their next meeting, he cleared four or five of the narrow stairs at a time, and soon found himself on the first landing, in the slipshod and dishevelled presence of Fraulein Göthekant.

"Ah! vot a time you 'ave keep me vaiting," exclaimed she, in what she fondly believed to be the purest English; for we may here mention in confidence to the public, trusting it won't get bruited about in any private circles, that Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, though he had long extacised in the most high-pressure style upon German literature, and translated divers German poems and tales, was yet innocent of knowing a single guttural of that most bronchitial language; so much for appearances and circumstantial evidence.

"I have got," continued Fraulein, "the most *loafly* supper!—a cabbage soupe, how you call it!—and dose big loafly onion of Spain, and now dey vill be all colt—dey gat so soon colt."

"Are onions then so like love! my charming friend, that the hotter they are, the sooner they cool?" asked the gentleman thus apostrophized, with a mock heroic air, and the ghost of a leer.

"No, not in a Garman hearts; but de Anglishe he is a colt-peoples, de loafers and all," responded Fraulein, throwing up her large eyes, which were not on that account the more beautiful, being of a fishy, yellowish green, watery hue—of which, however, none of her other features had any cause to be jealous—as her cheek-bones rose high like two bastions on either side of her nose; while her mouth was more like a long zig-zag sheep-walk, than any thing else, with various puffings and projections about it, as if for the last twenty years the remorseless and battering-ram gutturals of her mother tongue had been hurled from her throat with such an impetus, as to mutilate and maltreat her lips in the most shocking manner in issuing from them; while her elf locks of black hair, she wore à l'enfant about her shoulders, and from a more Celtic, than Circean, habit she had of scratching her head to elicit ideas during her literary gestations, and midnight translations for Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars (which he afterwards did into polished English at his great paper works), its mazes more resembled those of the Cretan labyrinth than of "the lady's real head of hair;" so that her chief points of attraction consisted in youth, a trim little figure, and having some brains inside of her head—if she had no beauty outside of it,—which brains in a woman, men of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' calibre like well enough for use, however they may eschew them for companionship; and, although her national mixture of coarseness and cleverness, saurkraut and sentiment, often jarred upon the delicate perceptions of the fine gentleman; still her German, and other grammatical and governess attributes, were exceedingly useful to the professional

littérateur ; so that, as the advertising puffs say relative to purchasing tallow candles wholesale, in installing Fraulein Adelaida Göthekant among the Odalisks of his Zenana—he had “combined economy with utility.”

“Prician protect me ! What ! do I hear lovers in the plural number ? I had flattered myself your knowledge of the English had not been so extensive, Adelaida ?”

“No intede, de loafer I have is in te singular number, and a var singular loafer he is, so seldom to coam near me ; and to keep me waiting suppere when he dose coam, and spoil all my loafly onion of Spain in dis vay. But coam,” added she, opening a small folding door into another little den, called in the house, “the dining-room,”—“let-us go to suppere at last ; for I am quite exhause, exhause,—how you say ?—wid griefs and hongers.”

“Faugh ! supper—and such a supper !—I have this moment dined ; but I shall be charmed to see my Light of the Harem at her ‘feast of roses,’—cabbage roses, though they be !”

“Ah ! *doujours le bersiflage*,” muttered Fraulein, in what she intended for French(!) which she always resorted to when she was determined her inamorato should understand her, and at the same time that she did not like to run the risk of being cutting in (un) plain English—“*Houi, toujours le bersiflage !*” she repeated, as she plunged a knife, in most dagger-like style, into the very heart of one of “*the LOAFLY onion of Spain !*”

“Au contraire, ma belle,” replied the gentleman ; “I never was more serious ; for, first of all, are you not about to leave me for a time to-morrow ? and, next, we have a little matter of business to transact, but as I never can do anything without my pipe (which was quite true ; for, like most modern celebrities, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars could do nothing without a puff ! and after all this was but common gratitude, for puffs had been the making of him !) so with your permission, Adelaida, I will light my meerscham ; but have you any brandy in the house ?” And so saying, he took a large German pipe from the chimney-

piece, and plunged his fingers into a blue jar of Latakai beside it—pipes and their supply being the fixed Lares and Penates of his numerous promiscuous abodes. The brandy, having been brought from a neighbouring *cabaret*, was, as may be supposed, pronounced execrable; so, flinging the vermillion-locked Hebe a sovereign, he ordered her (though it was then past midnight) to take a cab and go to the Hyde Park Hotel for a bottle of cognac; holding out the seductive promise, that if it was not genuine, when she brought it he would fling it at her head, and make her pay for it out of her wages. As the small, scantily, and vulgarly furnished room became enveloped in clouds of smoke, the tableau to be seen athwart them, however it might have been historic, was certainly not classical; for perhaps, after all, setting aside conventionalities, *the* most vulgar thing in the world is vice; it must necessarily be so from its contacts; and the features of the man now puffing out, in that chair, the vapour of life with that of tobacco—features which nature had, at least, made aristocratic—were daily and hourly calcining down into the mirey and debased type of sensuality and cynicism. Whenever his peculiarly animal and revolting-looking mouth was for a moment freed from the amber tube of the pipe, an expression of mingled disgust and contempt elongated the corners of it, as he looked at his poor companion, shovelling (for no other word could express her gastronomic gymnastics), with the whole blade of her knife, “the loafly onion of Spain!” into her capacious mouth. And yet he felt grateful to anything that went into it, inasmuch as that it prevented the horribly discordant sounds that were wont to issue out of it. For among his epicurean sensitivenesses, forced and stimulated to the uttermost, he was not, of course, without a due appreciation of that most paramount and magnetic of all psychological spells, a sweet voice; fresh, too, from Edith, who, had she been hideous, instead of “passing fair,” had still a voice with whose sole, yet concrete witchery, she might have wooed and won a world; for to its gentle, silvery, ever-varying, yet always perfectly mo-

dulated inflections, even the world-wide fame of Cleopatra's must have been second. Then, too, the whole *entourage* was so coarse, so vulgar, so material; for it matters little whether the shrine be of common clay, or of gilded marble, it is the presiding divinity who debases* or exalts it. Put an elegant and refined woman in the highest garret, or the lowest cellar, and there will still be a subtle and purifying atmosphere of spiritual superiority, rising beyond and dominating the worst meannesses of locality. Whereas, place a vulgar and common-place one in the Palace of the Genii, surrounded by sybarite etherealisms, and her sole presence will rob them of every grace, and make them "of the earth, earthy." Even Nature's most exquisite of all poetry (after her starry epics), her fugitive pieces, the flowers!—the vulgar can contrive to vulgarize, for who has not seen some bright young queenly rose, surrounded by her fragrant court of pansies, heliotropes, myrtle, and mignonette, democratically banished to some blue mug! or yellow jug! or incarcerated in torturing perpendicularity in some blue, green, or lilac hyacinth glass? But we must leave the flowers, and return to the bulbs. After having discussed the "loafly onion of Spain!" Fraulein took a deep draught of the "loafly beer of England."

"Ah! dat is so goot!" said she, laying down the glass, and drawing a long breath after her exertions.

"Well," cried Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, pointing with his pipe to the tin cover of a dish that had not yet been revealed, but much in the same tone of mingled wonder and curiosity that he would have pointed to one of Monsieur Robin the conjuror's tin pyramids, and asked him what he meant to do next—"what d—d thing have you got under there?"

"Oh! dat is dogs and beans,* but I shall not take none, for I eat so much to my dinnere (I am so ver fond of dogs and beans) dat I quite make my stomach to ache, till I scream wis de pains, and I robe, and robe, and was oblige to take de oil of de cas—"

* *Anglice*, ducks and peas.

"There! there! for heaven's sake! that's enough!" cried her companion, first stopping his ears, and then dashing the bowl of his pipe with as much vengeance on the hob as if it had been the brains of his fair German friend.

"Really, vone vould tink," said the latter, shrugging her shoulders, "dat you groache* me de littell enjoyments I haves."

"Heaven forbid!" replied he, with a responsive shrug, while he refilled his pipe; "but when you have finished your 'dogs and beans,' or cats and cauliflowers, or any other little culinary rarities that you may feel inclined to discuss, we will talk about the very comfortable and highly lucrative engagement I have got for you with Mrs. Piers Moncton."

"Oh, I have dones now," said Fraulein, putting back her chair in a retrograde manner as she rose from the table, and making her sleeve do the duty of a napkin, wiping her mouth across it, while she seized a fork, and compelled it to perform little amateur experiments in dental surgery, not usually expected from, or executed by similar implements; after which, she approached Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, inhaled with great gusto the fumes of his meerschaum, as she would have done the air of her native hills, and then put her arm round his neck, from which he recoiled as if a boa constrictor had suddenly paid him the same little friendly attention.

"There, my dear Adelaida," said he, slipping through the coil, and then rising, in order to place a chair for her at the opposite extremity to his own. "Sit down; it is bad for the digestion to move about immediately after eating; so for the next ten minutes consider me, 'Sir Oracle,' and 'when I ope my mouth let no dog bark,' at least none of those that you have been eating, and as for the beans, I am Pythagorean in my principles as regards them, so pray 'breathe not their name' for the future. But what is much more germane, if less German, to the matter, is, that I am delighted to tell you, that the Para-

* Grudge.

sité of Pennafior never half so effectually succeeded in convincing Signor Gil Blas of Santillane that *he* was the eighth wonder of the world ! as I have in making that little fool Mrs. Moncton believe that you are ; and upon the strength of it, she has consented to give you seventy guineas a year ; so that from this out, my dear Adelaida, that is while you retain her situation, I shall allow you only £80 a year, which, with the £70 you will receive from her, will make up the £100 a year, I promised to give you : don't you see ?”

“Non ! non ! dat is not vair, not vot you promeese me,” cried Fraulein, rising and pacing the room in great perturbation, as she tightly folded her arms, and shook her elf locks like an incipient storm to and fro. “You tell to me virst dat as soon as your ole relation die, you shall make me de Frau von Verrars ; and ubon dat, I consent bevore han to pay you my obedience as a vife,—I stay shut up in de house, in de ole gown just like von English vife, vile you go about every vere, vor your pleasure, like de English husband. Moreover, I clean your meerscham, translate all your vine ting from de Garman, knit you stockings vich you never veer, and make you loafly cabbage soup vich you nevare eat ; like de goot German vife ; and for all dis, to be vife, and no vife, you give to me von hondert pounds a year ! first breaking de income tax off of him ! and I try hard to live on him in your dear country, and to send somes out of him to my poor mooter ! who tink I am de rich Frau von Verrars ; and now because I get place to zlave myself as governess, and be your zpy to tell you all dat go on in dis Meesse Moncton's house, you vant to cheat me out of seventy pound year ! You are bad, bad man ; I bel-lieve you to be all lie, all cheat ! I don't tink you have got no ole voman going to die, and to leaves you monies ; and if she did, I am sure you would sbend it all on de vorship ove yourselves, and would never give to me von kreutzer, or even make me de Frau von Verrars ; but I shall stay here ; I vill not go and be governess to nobody !”

"Very well, madame," said her auditor, in his turn rising and folding his arms, "stay here and starve! You cannot be such a fool as not to know that you are completely in my power, and that consequently your means of subsistence depend wholly and solely upon my will and pleasure. Dare to thwart me but in the smallest degree! and not another sou shall you ever receive from me; and decidedly your *beauty!* will not be likely to procure you more from any other source."

Stung to madness by the cowardly, cold-blooded villainy of this fiendlike threat, the big tears now rolled down the poor German girl's pale cheeks, made paler by many a prolonged vigil at the oar of her destroyer's literary galley, at which he had branded and chained her.

"Non! non! I will not starve to please you!" she cried, with fearful energy, her eyes glaring wildly, and lit up by the red glow of two crimson spots that had suddenly burst out like two bude lights on the high summit of each cheekbone;—"I have slave hard for you, to destroy myself, I will now slave though not so hard, to zave and subbort myself and my mooter, my poor mooter!"

And here the poor creature burst into a paroxysm of natural tears, which for a moment fell like a refreshing shower upon the parched and arid desolation of her supernatural excitement.

"And pray, madam," said her inhuman betrayer, with the look and in the withering, mocking tone of a fiend, "who do you think will be likely to engage my cast-off mistress for a governess, when once that fact is publicly known—as I will take care it shall be?"

"Non, non!" almost shrieked the unhappy girl,—"I am not your mistresses, vor you promise, you zwear by all dat is zacred in heaven and earts dat you make your vifes of me."

"And a pretty fool you must have been! not to know that when a man of *my rank* talks of love to a woman of *yours*, such promises are nothing more than the simulated base coin of sterling proposals, which pass admirably in the mart of seduction for

the purchase of *light* merchandize; therefore, of course you knew, my dear," added he with infernal irony and *sang froid*, "that I merely intended to seduce you."

His wretched companion stopped suddenly short in her hurried and excited pacing to and fro, and elongating her arms as she dug her nails into the palm of each hand with a sort of spasmodic convulsion, looked almost handsome from the inspired flash of honest indignation, which lit up her whole being, limbs, as well as features; notwithstanding the almost maniac mixture of the ludicrous, and the horrible, in her words, as she hissed out through her set teeth—

"*Man teife!* it is false, false as hell! or as *you*, vich is de same ting;—how should I know you only mean to seduce me? —I never vos seduce before! No von ever speak to me of *loaf* till you come vid de 'Rohler' under von arm, and de whole of de 'Piccolomini' under de oder; and ven I ask you vot you pay me for de translation, you tell to me dat ve most not talk of de nasty money, dat you loafs me to distractions! Oh! yes, dat vas true, at all events; for de distractions is come, but it is to me. You talk dis loaf to me day after day, for twelvemont, till I vinish to translate Schiller vor you; you tell to me I shall be de Frau von Verrars, but dat it cannot be till your ole relation die, but you shall give to me till den von hon-dret a year. I tink of my poor mooter wis scarce as many thä-lers at Manheim, and I fall into your vile guët-à-pens! Now, indeed, I onderstan vot it is to be fool! It is to believe dat de fine gentlemans would be ashame before men to tell lies, and afraids before God to break his oats (oaths); but from dis hour I know and I despise you—great man as you tink yourself! and poor Garman girl as you tink me? but I shall"—

Here she was suddenly interrupted by the return of the red-haired nymph with the brandy. The name of this Hebe was Caroline; but Fraulein had condensed and travestied it into the affectionate diminutive and incognita of "CORRY!" So now turning to her, with her sobbing voice and swollen eyes, she hastily vociferated,

"Corry! you get for me von cab dis minute—I leave dis house directly—I take myself away now dis instant!"

The frightened handmaiden, whose ardent locks actually appeared to grow redder under excitement, now looked hurriedly from her *soi-disant* mistress to her real master, whereupon the latter, in his usual dictatorial tone, thundered out—

"At your peril, presume to do any thing of the kind! Leave the room!"

And Corry, who was in the habit of flying before him as dust does before a March wind, vanished instantly,—only too happy to have *his* fiat warrant for her exit; while he seized the poker by the centre, and with its top knocked the neck off the bottle of cognac; after which he poured out and drank at a draught, half a tumbler of that mild and soothing beverage! But to do Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars justice,—exclusive of the derangement that all violent excitement occasions to the nervous system, and to the digestive organs, and independent of his masculine horror of scenes in general; and his peculiar theories, and practice, of a piano, and languid deportment, as the distinguishing mark of a fine gentleman, and one of the most celebrated fatuities about town,—he had, in common with other wild beasts and birds of prey, a decided partiality for luring his victims by the *suave* blandishments of treachery, rather than seizing upon them by the open powers of violence; therefore, whenever the raging devil within him rose rampant to the surface, and wagged its head out of his eyes, and lashed its tail through his mouth,—no sooner did reflection give him time to summon his constant SBIRRI, CAUTION and HYPOCRISY, than he sent it "down, down to hell!" again, pacifying it with a sop of promised future triumph; so that now, having replaced the empty glass upon the table, drained as it was to the last drop, he shifted his ground, and changed his tactics; for, approaching his victim, and attempting to encircle her waist with his arm, which, however, she avoided by bounding, as if she had been galvanized, to the other end of the room—

"My dearest Adelaida," said he, in his softest and most penitential voice, impiously joining his hands as if in prayer, "forgive me, pray forgive me! I did not mean one word of all I said to my own little wifey; but women are so d—d provoking, and do say such cutting things, that they quite madden one; and when you doubted *my honour!* and above all my *love!* for you, I was stung into saying all those bitter words which only came from my lips, but never from my heart."

"Non!" broke in the still indignant though gradually softening Adelaide, "because I believe you have not got no heart for notink to *coame* from."

"Ungrateful girl!" ejaculated Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, throwing up his eyes, his right arm springing up after them, as if impelled by machinery, while his whole tone and manner were those of the injured and despairing lover, as the part is misconceived and misrepresented at minor theatres, "is *this* the return you make me," he continued, "for having sacrificed my youth! my hopes! my ambition! my all! at the shrine of love!—for once our intended marriage known (and do I not run the constant risk of having my visits to you discovered), all my expectations from my aunt are at an end, and yet you can, after such self-sacrifice and devotion on my part, thus coolly, thus heartlessly throw me off!"

The poor bewildered girl looked up through her tears. She had heard a hurricane of fine words, uttered in an impassioned manner, in a language which she understood but very imperfectly, and she did not know what to believe: so like most women in a similar dilemma, she set reason at defiance, and tried to believe what she wished.

"I trow you off! non! non!—is it possibles, den, dat after all you loaf me?"

"Is it possible that you can doubt it?"

"Ah! but what for den you say to me such cruel, such vicked ting?"

"Why did you, dearest Adelaida, goad me into madness by saying such bitter, such unjust things?"

"Non! not unjust; for you try to take from me vot you promise to me, and vot I vork ver hard for, and vot I hope to lay by for a provisions for my poor mooter at de end of her days. Ah! it is ver bad, ver *ladre* dat, it is not *loaf* dat—oh, no, it is not *loaf*; loaf *give* all, but you take all. Non, non! I have dream, but now I waken; it is not loaf, dere is no loaf, dere never was no loaf, and I may trow myself to de Thames venever I please."

Critical as the crisis was, her heartless companion could not resist indulging in his idea of a jest, so he said—

"Pray don't, for only think how it would frighten the fish!"

"Vot you mean by frighten the *vish*?" cried she, glaring at him, exasperated at the vague suspicion she had, that he was turning her misery into ridicule.

"That is an English idiom, my own love," said the monster, "which means that you would commit murder as well as suicide; for you do not suppose *I* could live an hour after you?"

She groaned, and shook her head incredulously, as she sent an electric telegraph message through all the long vistas of her memory, demanding a return of the names of bad men who had nevertheless had the one virtue of loving, and that deeply and sincerely: foremost on the list was Nero, and his infatuation for Poppæa; Caligula, and his devotion to Cæsonia; winding up with Harry the Eighth, whom death cut off before he had time to cut off Catherine Parr's head, and whom therefore history kindly assumes that he loved. Though not exactly aware that she was trying him by his peers, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars saw that she was deliberating about something; and as we generally judge others by ourselves, he concluded that that something was money; so resuming his contrite and conciliatory tone, he said—

"Now, my dearest love, with regard to that paltry money, which was the origin of all this, as indeed it generally is the root of all evil, I have peculiar and tenacious prejudices about

monetary transactions between man and wife, in which light we may consider ourselves; that is, I hate and detest the separation and limitation (!) of allowances, and pin money, and all that sort of thing; for where there is but one heart, so should there be but one purse,* and all I meant was, that as I was devilish hard up just now, I would merely give you £30 a-year during the time you were with Mrs. Moncton, thereby considering that my own Adelaida gave me £70, of which I happened to be in want, reserving to myself the future far greater satisfaction of giving her (when my coffers were better replenished) a much larger sum, without limit or stipulation."

"Ah! if you had but say so to me at first," sobbed the poor girl, still half bewildered from the stunning villany of his former threats, and staring wildly around her, to try and anchor her aching eyes and senses upon the solid basis of some reality, "you know ver well I do not desire better den to give you alls I could, but dat is ver different from de cruel ting you say to me before, and I do fear dat as in wines, so in de passion, men speak de trute, and dat vot you say to me now is only de ruse, de manœuvre de *chicane*."

"Adelaida!" cried he, flinging himself on his knees before her, and seizig both her hands, which she vainly struggled to get away from him, "I swear to you by—

"Non! non!"—said she interrupting him—"do not swear; I hate swear, and you have broken my hearts, so it cannot hold any more of your promise."

Here Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, who had regained his feet, made another abortive attempt to embrace her, and in the struggle pushed down a piece of Berlin work that was covering a small bird-cage that hung in the window, tenanted by a starling, which had travelled with its mistress all the way from Mannheim.

* Which of course the man should keep to himself intact, without the woman ever presuming to infringe upon it, thought Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, though it did not at this moment suit his purpose to say so.

"Leave me alone," said Fraulein repulsing him—"I cannot forget."

Thus disturbed, and seeing the lights which he mistook for the sun, the starling, as if in an admonitory endorsement of her assertion, broke in with a loud, "Vergiss mein nicht!" *

"Ah!" half shrieked his mistress, "it is as ifs my poor mooter spoke to me, for she taught you dat! Non, my poor leetel freins, I shall not forgets—nor forget you." And she sank into an arm-chair, in such a paroxysm of hysterics, that it ended in a dead swoon. Now it was, that her companion being left alone, took counsel of his familiar; he looked at his victim for a few seconds with a conflicting expression of resolution and irresolution; that is, he had evidently resolved upon the execution of some still darker villainy, yet was irresolute as to the mode of executing it; he mechanically put his hands simultaneously into each of his waistcoat pockets in quest of something, which apparently not finding, he muttered—

"D—n it, I've left it at home." After which, looking furtively round the room, a sort of fiendish joy lit up his ghastly features, as upon the mantelpiece he descried a small purple morocco homoeopathic medicine-case containing about two dozen Lilliputian phials, of wonderful antidotes, but at the same time subtle poisons. He seized it, and as he did so, while selecting one from the most deadly of its contents, the train of thought which passed through his mind was this—he tightly closing his right eye the while, and with the forefinger of his right hand deliberately, at measured intervals, counting upon the first, second, and third fingers of his left hand, as if he had been dissecting a syllogism preliminary to pronouncing the conclusive *probatum est*, or Q. E. D.—

"The devil of it is, that a sudden death entails an inquest; and then, my liaison with her would come out—and that would never do just at this moment; but, no; what a fool I am!—

* Forget me not.

all that can be easily arranged : Blackiswhite, of 'The Morning Puff,' and Taurus, of 'The Jack Ass,' will insert anything I please ; and a strong equinoctial puff in both the morning and evening papers, with a pasquinade compliment, which Carlo Dials can get paid me in next Wednesday's 'Judy,' about my benevolent and generous literary patronage of this poor young German girl, and my kind exertions to get her a situation with Mrs. Moncton, coupled with the strong *prima faciæ* evidence of her ugliness, will soon lay that phantom, and put the sapient public completely on a wrong scent. A glorious thing, the Press—certainly ! at least, when one's *of* it. How completely it silenced and mystified the world, and how cleverly it got Wober out of that murder of his upon Ormeton, more cleverly still trying to blast Mrs. Wober's character, by shifting all the odium upon her. That is where we leviathans of the Press are so masterly in always crushing the victims, and erecting a pedestal of their mutilated remains whereon to elevate the aggressor beyond justice up to the artificial level of public admiration ! —Who was it called woman 'a beautiful error in creation ?' " continued he, eyeing the still inanimate form before him— " Well, there can be no doubt of the error, though the beauty is sometimes left out ; but the real error of her creation is her perpetuity ; decidedly she should have ended with her mission, which is to please in whatever shape that may be, whether as a monetary medium as an heiress, or as one of enchantment as a houri, or even as a useful drudge, like that poor wretch there. But when she ceases to please,—assuredly, had nature been complete in her conception, she would have so organized her, that she should cease to exist. What a devil of a bore it would be if *all* our pleasures were permitted to haunt us *de jure* ! for ever after we had dismissed them *de facto*. Shade of Apicius ! what theoretical indigestions one would have of long discussed salmis, and hecatombs of truffles !—what bottle imps would haunt one whose spirit had long since fled !—in short, far worse than the skeleton of the Egyptians at their banquets, Belshaz-

zar would have to give us the wall, for we should have a 'MENE TEKEL UPHARSIN' engraved with our armorial bearings upon every dish !”

“Well, now, let me see, which of these ?” and he held the label of one small bottle after another to the light, murmuring their names—“pulsatilla, brionia, nux-vomica,” till he came to “belladonna,” which latter he replaced with a demoniac sneer, muttering—

“Scarcely ; for the homœopathic principle is like to like ; it would be a sort of *mauvaise plaisanterie* unbecfitting the solemnity of the occasion. Ah ! come, this is better—‘Aconite ;’ now for the dénouement ; a plot is no plot unless it is naturally, as well as graphically worked up. Yes, that is it. When I have given her half of this bottle, though a quarter would do the business, I must leave the phial in her hand, the grasp of death is a tight one ; she will not be likely to drop it ; then I must burn all her letters, lest anything in them should transpire to criminate me ; when I say all, not those of Professor Gruntandstern, praising my kindness in endeavouring to get her a governess’s place, and lauding my German translations to the skies—those she keeps tied with a piece of blue ribbon. Ah ! by Jove, well thought of ; I must see that the desk is there, it would be too unlucky if she should have packed it up ?” And he took one of the candles, and noiselessly opened the folding-door leading to the other room ; there he found the desk with the key in it ; he seized it, and having brought it into the supper-room, and replaced the light on the table, he actually hugged himself (or perhaps it was his interior friend) with delight at his success. “Now,” thought he, “for the final touch, I must ring as if the house was on fire (after I have given it to her), for that d—d ugly red-haired maid, who must find me tearing my hair like a madman, I must tell her to go instantly for all the doctors in the place ; for that her mistress has poisoned herself by taking an over dose of aconite ; that she was in such spirits at the idea of Mrs. Moncton having en-

gaged her, that she was laughing and talking after supper, and not looking at the quantity of globules she was letting drop into the six dessert spoonfuls of water she had measured out; that I cried out in horror to her not to drink it; but before I could get across the room to snatch the glass out of her hand, she had swallowed the greater part of the contents—the rest I must carefully leave in the glass to be analysed; and this story I must get the girl to listen to, that she may give it in her evidence, as it is the one I mean to stick to with the doctors; and while she is gone for them, I can burn the letters. Yes, that's it. Now for it!" continued he, looking nervously round the room, and his hand trembling in spite of himself, as he poured out more than half the contents of the phial of aconite into about a wine-glassful of water, which he carefully measured by spoonfuls, thoroughly dissolving the whole in a tumbler. "If I can but only pour it down her throat, without rousing her!" and once more he looked fearfully round the small room, filled with false shadows from the long wicks of the candles. "Tush! what a fool I am!" added he, pouring out some more brandy and drinking it off. "I am not a dog, that I should be frightened at shadows; and my position in the world; my apparent despair! my instantly sending for medical advice; and my fearlessly giving up the remainder of the glass to be analysed—must and will ward off everything like suspicion from me; no one can see me—no one is here to"—

"Vergiss mein nicht!" screamed the starling, who had hitherto watched his proceedings in silence, turning its head from one side to the other, after the manner of birds; and who now uttered these sounds in such a shrill and piercing voice, accompanied by a flapping of his wings, that the glass fell from the trembling hand of the intended murderer and shattered into a thousand fragments at his feet.

These combined noises restored the suspended animation of Adelaida, who little dreamt of the fate she had so narrowly escaped. At the sight of her returning senses, and the conse-

quent defeat of his scheme, it would have been impossible to say to what depth of the infernal regions Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars consigned the poor starling; for like all those who have little faith in, or allegiance to God, he had the widest possible belief in the existence and potent influence of devils; being learned to a degree in dæmonology, having Peter Thyrrarus the Jesuit's tract, "*De Locis Infestis*," at his fingers' ends, and Sigismundus Scheretzius "*Lile de Spectris*" by heart; so that he held with Paracelsus and Cardan, that there were Foliots, Larea, Trulli, and other imps, who batten on bad dead men's souls, and who, by their nocturnal noises, when assuming the shape of birds, dogs, and other animals, scare and cheat living sinners out of their revenge. One of these, in his frustrated bewilderment, he now fully believed the starling to be; and certain it is that the ghost of Caligula, which, according to Suetonius, used to walk in Lavinia's garden, where his body was buried, never appalled her affrighted slaves half so much as the small, quick, bright, black eyes of that little bird, now peeping in and out through his *rus in urbe* of groundsel, did this "clever man," one of whose clever plots its overlooked insignificance had caused the subversion of.

"Vere am I? Vot am I?" said Fraulein, trying to recollect herself.

"Unfortunately, wide awake," muttered her companion.

"Vot is dis?" continued she, looking with a sort of half conscious interrogation at the small phial of aconite that had been placed in her hand. "Ah! mine Goat! I have no take all dis, surely!" cried she, eyeing with consternation its greatly diminished contents; "I have not take all dis; if I have I am deads!"

"No; you would have done so, though, but for that dam—ahem—dear bird. Adelaida, my dearest love, you really must go to bed; you are not well, and if you don't take care of yourself you won't be able to go to Mrs. Moncton's next week; and think what a sad thing that would be for you, for me, for

your poor mother; for are we not all one family, my own love?"

"Your own loaf?" murmured she, looking vacantly up in his face, as the words fell upon her ear; and then she added, "Non, non, I am not dying, you need not look so fright; de big drops roll from your forehead, and yet your hand he is colder den mine!" said she, laying hers upon it.

"Dying! No, my dear Adelaida, no fear of that!

"*'Qui cupit optatum cursu contingere metam,
Multa tulit fecitque puer, sudavit et alsit,'*"

muttered he, aside; and at the same time giving a hasty kick to the fragments of the broken glass which had contained the aconite. He had scarcely done so, when a black substance, that emitted divers coruscations, twined itself round his ankle.

"Heavens! what is that?" exclaimed he, starting back as if the fell fiend already held him in his grasp. It was only a black cat, which had been sleeping under the sofa, and which had seemingly been driven thence by thirst, for it now began lapping up the small pool of aconite that was slowly being absorbed by the carpet; and while the little victim, "regardless of its doom," was thus employed, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was equally busy in contradicting the disjointed testimony of his "dearest Adelaida's" returning senses, as to the conversation that had taken place between them, prior to her swoon; and finally succeeded in persuading her that she had dreamt it all; that they never had had a dispute about anything, and least of all about money—for what did *he* care for money, unless it was to lavish it upon *her*?

"But vot I do wid all dese medicines, and wid dis bottel I hold in my hands?" asked she, still doubtingly.

"Ah! there it is," replied he; "when you were first taken ill, which I attribute entirely to the d—d sort of suppers you eat, I wanted to send off for a doctor; you would not let me; but with that inveterate obstinacy (which, I must say, is the *only* thing approximating to a fault in my little *wife's* charac-

ter) would insist upon doctoring yourself, and in your confusion, when that fainting fit was stealing over you, you mixed nearly half that bottle of aconite, which would have instantaneously caused your death, had I not, in an agony, wrested the tumbler from your hand; in the struggle it fell, and was broken to atoms, but as you swooned before I had well snatched the poison from you, you retained the phial firmly in your grasp,* and my frantic despair at fancying you were really dead when you fainted, and the shrill cries of that poor bird, which I shall always love for it, brought you to."

"Tank you, mine friens, tank you," said poor Fraulein, stretching out her hand to him, accompanied by a large flabby look, meant to be extremely tender, but which, from the uncongenial form and colour of her eyes, would have been extremely ludicrous, had it not been extremely horrible! nor was a suitable accompaniment wanting to it, for presently the poor cat, with the most piteous and unearthly yells, began to bound and dart about the room, like one possessed.

"Ah! de gat! de gat! vot has he got, Tome, Tome, poor yellow! vot is de matters vis you?" Thus appealed to, the poor animal gave one supreme yell, and then sank down in fearful convulsions, its green eyes rolling like two meteoric fires in all directions, the foam gushing out of its mouth, till after two hard and final gasps, the poor thing was released from its terrific agonies by death.

"Ah! mine poor Tome! mine poor gat! he is dead!" cried Fraulein, wringing her hands, as she stooped down to look at him.

"My dearest love," said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, in his softest voice, as he drew her away with gentle force towards the sofa; "I would not for the world, at such a moment, upbraid you, or check that loveliest attribute of woman, pity; but, for the sake of preventing future evil, I must impress upon you the fatal

*The clever man forgot that, in that shadow of death—a swoon, the muscles of the fingers relax instead of close.

consequences of your obstinacy, in not allowing me to send for a doctor, and insisting upon doctoring yourself; that poor animal, of whom you were so fond, and who was such a fitting companion for you, has fallen a victim to it, by lapping the aconite which you had mixed, and which I let fall in my anxiety to save you from a similar fate. True, it is only a cat; but, Adelaida, life is a solemn and sacred thing! which none have a right to take, save the great BEING who bestows it."

Scarcely had he concluded this fine sentiment, and ibid peroration, which he was well aware would travel to Germany by the next morning's post, and figure in the "Augsberg Gazette" the following week, as an anecdote of "the great Ferrars!" than Fraulein threw her arms round his neck (and considering his revolting hypocrisy, the punishment, though *frightful*, was not too great), exclaiming as she did so,—

"Ah, yes, you have de hearts, de vine, nobel hearts, aftere all; nevere again vill I doubts it. And, oh! how prouds I shall be ven all de worlde shall know dat I am de Frau Von Verrars!"

As "he that consenteth to a thief is worse than the thief," so the accomplices of all sins are perhaps worse than their originator, and, as pride is a vice, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars's moral perceptions (for this occasion only) were too nice to join in the anticipated pride of this misguided young person, consequently he renewed his entreaties that she would lose no time in seeking that rest of which she evidently stood so much in need, promising to discuss *their* future prospects another time, and something after the fashion of that other great man, Major Longbow, who when his wife was killed by a *coup de soleil*, while sitting at dinner, records that with infinite promptitude he rang for the servant to bring clean glasses, and sweep his mistress away. He then rung for the red-haired maid to remove the remains of poor Grimalkin, and conduct the resuscitated German up-stairs. Having taken leave of her in the most affectionate manner, especially conjuring her to fling all homœopathic medicines into

the fire, adding that he did not much like even leaving her with that "d—d red precipitate," as he allegorically called the brusque, bouncing maid ; but Fraulein having assured him that "CORRY" was very attentive to her, he descended the narrow stairs in greater haste than he had ascended them some three hours before, and, as he slammed to the hall-door after him, the clock of a neighbouring church struck three. Oh, CHANCE!—thou hood-winked meter-out of this world's destinies, ever pushing on vice and folly into high places and pleasant paths, and poking poor virtue and modest merit at best into obscure holes and corners, well dost thou keep the unities of thy promiscuous drama, stepping in where conscience has given up her garrison, and preventing crimes which would put their perpetrators even beyond *thy* mighty power to shield from the rarely issued vetos of justice !

On ! on ! through the gray cold gloom of expiring night, stalked, like a delegate shadow from the nether powers, the clever man. In heaven, as on earth, the struggle was progressing between light and darkness. Another scion of eternity, another day was gliding from nature's lap, with life for its plaything ! and death for its lesson ! and that it did not dawn upon another murderer was again thy gyratory work. Oh, CHANCE, thou great impenetrable INCOGNITO OF GOD !

The World, the Flesh and the Devil.

SECTION X.

"Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto thee."—Ps. cxiv. 8.

"Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness."—Ibid. cxil. 4.

"Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."—Luke xxii. 31, 32.

"Oh! what may man within him hide,
Though angel on the outward side!"

SHAKESPEARE.

"Seems he a dove? his feathers are but borrowed:
For he's disposed as the evil raven."

Ibid.

— "Chlamydemque ut pendeat apte
Collocat, ut limbus totumque appareat aurum."

OVID. MET. 2.

THE morning after Fraulein Göthekant's narrow escape of going farther without, perhaps, faring worse, the sun—that impartial and very worldly luminary, which "shines alike on the just and on the unjust"—shot a timorous ray through the heavy brown velvet hangings, fringed with gold, on the carved oak book-cases and bronze busts of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' sitting-room in the Albany, while, in the equally large and still more luxuriantly-furnished bed-room annexed to it, Clarke, who, all his life, had radiated as a valet, and now had the honour of acting as a sort of quotidian Frankenstein to that great man, and constructing him out of the most varied and incongruous materials for astonishing the world! was drawing aside, with his left hand,

the heavy bed-curtains of crimson Genoa velvet, lined with richly flowered white Lyons damask, while, in his left, he held a small gilt salver, laden with letters, notes, and newspapers.

"Beg pardon, sir," said he, in reply to his master's anything but *pious* exclamation at being awakened, "but you *particklar* ordered, when you came home this morning, that I was not to let you sleep a minute longer than nine."

"Oh, ah! H——I and the D——I, so I did!" said the other, between the interstices of a yawn, as he stretched his arms above his head, flinging, at the conclusion of this movement, his silk *empecinado* night-cap in Clarke's face, and telling him to bring his pipe, as he snatched the letters off the salver, and hastily broke the seal of one of them, and as hastily tossed it aside, after casting his eye over it.

"You'll excuse me, sir, but your orders *was*, that I was on no account to let any tobacco come within a mile of you, this morning, but, on the contrary, to prepare an ammonia warm bath, and a *Hydrahell* * *douche* for you, both of which *is* ready, sir."

For never were Cleopatra, Poppæa, Phryne, or Henry the Third of France, more skilled in the compounding of, or addicted to the use of cosmetics, than was Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, thinking, no doubt, like these prototypes, that they had the power of varnishing over externally, the ravages that vice made internally.

"Ah! true again; I forgot. Give me——," added he, merely pointing to a small gold filigree box on the toilet—for he seldom wasted more breath than these two words required, when issuing his mandates—preferring to do so pantomimically. The box contained little dark tablets of some fragrant compounds for warranting the breath, and establishing an *alibi* for tobacco.

"Deuce take it," muttered he, as he put one or two of them

* Hydromel, or honey and water.

into his mouth, "I never was so sleepy; and then the ingratitude of the creatures, after all the trouble they give one: however, *she* is worth it,—aye, as well worth it as Helen was worth the Trojan war: if indeed any woman is worth a ten years' siege. Presto! we manage those things better now-a-days! Faugh! I've actually got the taste of those d——d onions of last night still in my mouth, as vividly as if I had committed the enormity of eating them. No wonder that squills should prevent the attraction of the magnet, for they would prevent the attraction of Venus herself. Clarke," added he, aloud—for the foregoing soliloquy had been a mental one—"I'll do my teeth in bed."

"Very good, sir."

And this human electric telegraph disappeared, and almost instantaneously re-appeared from the dressing-room, with two fine damask napkins slung over one arm, a gold basin containing within it two gold mugs, one filled with tepid water, and the other containing some half-dozen different-sized gold-mounted tooth-brushes, a small phial of tincture of myrrh, and a flask of Arquebusade, all of which he arranged on the bed, so that his master should have *but* the one indispensable trouble of brushing his own teeth, for even one of the napkins he tied under his chin, as if he had been an infant, and he held the other with the tooth-powder and a small mirror before him. While Clarke was thus standing—not exactly like Patience—neither absolutely on a monument—a violent ring came to the outer door.

"Who the d—I can that be? Some of those d—d tradespeople with their 'little account,' of which I take less account. Would they could be got to do the same. Ha! ha! ha!" grinned Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, as he always did at his own witty conceits; and then recommenced the education of his teeth, but had scarcely done so when the ring was repeated more violently than before.

"You had better see who it is, Clarke," said his master,

again pausing in his operations; but, instead of moving, the valet merely replied, with the true *sang froid* of greatness,—

“Mrs. Lyon is there, sir.”

“Ah, well! if it’s any d—d dun, tell her I beg she’ll be Mrs. Tiger,” and here a knock was heard at the bed-room door.

“Go, quick! Clarke! I *cannot* be disturbed this morning—I am going out on particular business, and I can’t see *any* one—not Mr. Trevylian, Mr. Coakington, or *any* body, *mind*.”

“Not Mr. Benaraby, sir?” put in the ever-considerate valet.

“Mr. Bendevil! not *anybody*, sir; do you understand English, and be d—d to you?”

“Why, yes, of course, I do, sir, when you speak it so very plainly,” bowed Clarke, as he walked to the door, upon opening which Mrs. Lyon, whose philosophy was quite Hudibrastic, as she always thought discretion was the wisest part of valour, and, therefore, invariably kept as much out of her master’s sight as possible, now slunk back behind the door, and poking in her skinny hand, at the end of which she gingerly held a card, as if afraid that *it* would give her the plague, or else that *she* might communicate to *it* the small-pox, which had opened a branch railway in all directions over her face, she merely said,—

“The gentleman would not stay a minute,” and then instantly followed his example.

The card was Mr. Benaraby’s, and on it was scrawled in pencil,—

“Dear Ferrars,—Pray sup with me to-morrow night from one to three, at the Clarendon: I have *news* for you.”

And under the word “*news*,” was a broad heavy dash, to render it more important and exciting.

“D——n it, can it be possible that the Redby party is coming in after all?” thought he, as he read these lines; but all he said was,—

“My slippers, Clarke;” and plunging his feet into their Miniver-lined recesses, he made but three bounds from the bed to the bath-room, enjoying, for about twenty minutes, the ex-

quisitely-lulling sensation, and the real *dolce far niente* of the ammonia bath. He next took a temporary plunge into health and freshness, as Clarke *douched* him with the icy-cold Hydromel, afterwards well rubbing him with proper Turkish bath-towels, and *puffing* him, but, this time, only with Pistachio nut powder and *Poudre de Riz*. Nor was it till he was again under Clarke's hands, during the curling of his whiskers, that he recurred to the word "*news*" on Mr. Benaraby's card, and once more began to ponder what its import could be.

"For," added the clever man to himself, in reply to his last self-addressed query, "he can't be such a d—d fool as to suppose that *I* can rejoice at the triumph of *his* party, at the expense of my own, or to believe in the "*Semper habens pylademque aliquem qui caret orem*," and all that superannuated sort of fudge. No, no; he's much too shrewd a fellow for *that*; too shrewd a man of the world not to know that what is called friendship is nothing more than a convenient or necessary intercourse between man and man; a slip-knot, tied by chance and circumstances, to serve a time and to suit a purpose; that friends, in fact, are nothing more than those sort of impromptu and make-shift liens in the social scale, which napkins and 'kerchiefs are to lovers and prisoners, constituting capital rope-ladders, upon an emergency, for either climbing or escaping, as the case may be; and I have no objection to serve as a medium for any enterprise of the former nature, as the ladder *must* be drawn in and cared for; *he* who uses it, alone putting his foot in it; but for the joint-stock scapegoatism of the latter sort of adventures, saving one's friends on a pinch, helping a lame dog over a stile, and all that sort of thing; no, thank you. The hemp is not yet sown in the soil of my devotion, that could produce a cord strong enough for that." With these, and similar reflections upon the possible, as well as probable nature of the "*news*" Benaraby had to communicate to him, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' toilet progressed rapidly under the presiding and inventive genius of Clarke. Having duly anointed his master's tresses with a golden-looking unguent called

Biochrine, or, "Life of the Hair," that worthy suddenly paused, and waving his badge of office, the large ivory-backed hair-brush high in air, much after the same at once inspired and fiatcal fashion that Jullien does his baton, he inquired the order of the day?—that is, whether the coiffure was to be in the uncurled, lank, and listless sick-of-life style, the *ébouriffée blasé sur tout* style, the House of Commons well-up in statistics style, or the crisp and conquering *point de-vice creve cœur* wave? Having decided upon the first of these as the most appropriate to his morning's undertaking, Clarke recommenced his operations, keeping in his mind's eye for models those two equally dull and equally greasy sources of enlightenment—a German student, and a tallow candle. Therefore, carefully brushing out all the lustrous biochrine, and collecting into heavy masses the meshes he had before so carefully separated into "airy," or as he himself would have more aptly expressed it, into *hairy* "nothings," in less than a quarter of an hour he had succeeded in uniting the principal *spécialités* of each of his models, and giving to his master's coiffure all the heaviness of the former, which toned in admirably with all the dulness of the latter.

If the "meek-eyed goddess, Patience," does by *accident* ever take up her abode with any class of men, much less with any individual man, (*the* most dubious of all the numerous and uncertain family of the Irs—this, by-the-by, which the author of "Notes and Queries" has never yet thrown any light upon,) most assuredly, the moment the said man, or men, are subjected to the toilet torture, or test, of putting on their cravats,—Patience, by a metamorphose not mentioned in Ovid, (probably from the fact that the ancient Romans, notwithstanding their numerous crimes, were yet guiltless of cravats)! yes, Patience, we say, instantly becomes love, and

" At sight of human ties,
Plumes her light wings and in a moment flies!"

And long had she fled on the present occasion, before the little

haystacks of neckcloths that now strewed Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' dressing-room, in bucolic bewilderment, had accumulated. Clarke, who stood behind, at one side of his chair, watching his master's cancelled essays one after the other over his shoulder in the glass, now unfolded his arms, and said—

"Beg pardon, sir; but if you recollect, when-ever you have your hair in that style, you always wear a plain black silk handkerchief, twisted more like an 'ay (hay) wisp than anything helse round your neck, with what Mr. Coakington calls 'a go-to-the-d—I tie, sir, with the long ends dangling gibbet-ways, sir.' "

"Ah! very true," replied his master, flinging down the Last of the Mohicans in the shape of one of Ludlem's "latest new summer patterns." "Why the deuce did you not remind me of that before I had the trouble of tumbling all those d—I handkerchiefs?"

"Thought, sir, p'raps, as you was a doing of it for the sake of practice, sir."

"You be ———," responded Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, giving a sort of Calcraft tug to the ends of the black kerchief, which had finally superseded all the others.

"If hit's all the same to you, sir, I'd rather be *ex-cused*," said Clarke, with the most deferential respect; adding to himself, as he went into the next room for a pair of boots—"Not that I have any himmediate hintention of leaving *your* service for, all that, old boy."

Lehocq had rather exceeded his warrant in making these boots as narrow, and the heels as high as possible, so that the clever man had

"One struggle more,"
Ere he was 'free!'

and could get

"Back to busy life again ;"

which, of course, in all civilized countries begins with breakfast. And profuse and *recherché* as Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' breakfasts were, including his favourite grill of devilled livers, which he pronounced to be infinitely better than their martyred brethren of Strasburg, consolidated into *foie gras*—this particular breakfast had not sufficient attraction to lure him into discussing it; for he missed the incitements, the whip and spur, as it were, of his morning meerschaum, and his daily dram of a claret glassful of raw brandy; for which he found the large draught of hock and seltzer water, which he now swallowed, but a poor substitute. In vain, too, Clarke, in humble imitation of *Ælius Verus*,* tried to tempt him with an equally elaborate gastronomic mosaic: fish delighted him not, nor fowl either. So, leisurely putting on his gloves, and taking his scrupulously brushed beaver from Clarke's hands, and carefully putting it on, somewhat slouched over his eyes, he issued forth, bending his steps towards St. James's Street, and from thence on to Westminster. He had scarcely turned into Great Queen Street, when he caught sight of the venerable the Archdeacon Panmuir's shovel hat disappearing round the Abbey into one of the cloisters. Now, although it must be confessed, that ever since he emerged from the Albany his *sole* had felt tighter than his heart, yet, nevertheless, this absence of the pompous, fussy, and always *mal-à-propos* Samuel Panmuir, from his own house, upon this particular morning, was a great relief to the clever man.

"So far, so well," said he, "there is *one* bore out of the way, at all events; and as for the old woman, bah! old women are one of the great facts (for every bore *is* a fact) in which I don't believe, my creed in all things being to believe only what suits me."

* In the gormandizing days of the Cæsars and the Galbas, *Ælius Verus* invented a Macedoine called the pentapharnaacum, composed of the flanks of swine, wild boars' brains, parrots' tongues, pheasants', peacocks' and nightingales' livers, and with the exception of the expense, a poor thing it must have been after all.

Edith had passed a restless and uncomfortable night. She could not doubt for what purpose Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had requested an interview with her; and all in rejoicing that he had not thought fit to do so four or five months sooner, she yet unsuspectingly and unacknowledged to herself in a manner resented his having angled with her so long; as he had never attempted to conceal his unqualified admiration for her, which she, in her own guilelessness, had thought was synonymous with love. But she now rejoiced that he had not sooner made any explicit declaration of it; for as we have before stated, not only had he interested her imagination by his talents, and unquestionable intellectual superiority over those with whom she lived; but he had, or rather she thought he had, as poor Donald's friend, excited in her a warmer interest; and under the delusion of mistaking this foreshadowing of affection for its reality, she might have accepted him from her love for her dead brother, coupled with that deep yearning which all pure and generous natures feel towards the worship of that pre-conceived Omnipotence, which is at once to fill the void of their existence and to consecrate the great temple of their heart. But since she had known Harold Lancaster the scales had fallen from her mental vision, and she became aware that, however great the Diana of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' intellectual Ephesus might be, it was far, *very far* from being even the unknown, much less the *true* divinity of whom her spirit was in search. And even had Mr. Lancaster inspired her with no deeper feeling than one of ordinary and passing liking, still his rival had contrived to appear so beset with all the darker and more odious passions, whenever she had seen them together, that he had fully endorsed Alciphron Murray's bad opinion of him, and had sealed and signed his own condemnation more than his worst enemy could have done—if, indeed, bad men *can* possess a worse enemy than themselves? Yet, as Edith always shrank from giving pain—were the object worthy or unworthy—she was nervously anxious to have this meeting over; like a patient dreading the commencement, yet longing for the termination of some critical and painful opera-

tion. But, for the racked spirit of a Christian, PRAYER is the chloroform which the Great Physician—the healer and binder-up of all wounds—has provided. Compassed as we are on all sides by the billows of our own conflicting passions, the tempest of adverse circumstances and overwhelming temptations, the sunken rocks of sin, the unsuspected under-currents of treachery, ever periling our frail bark on life's stormy sea; while the stoutest sails of our strongest resolutions are shattered by gales from all quarters of bitter disappointments, perplexing cares, prostrated strength, debilitated faculties, gnawing pain, heart-breaking bereavements, our whole crew of good intentions and virtuous aspirations disabled from gloomy doubts, and ineffectual struggles with undeveloped agonies, whose echoes are curses and whose shadows are fears!—whither, indeed, can we take refuge *but in Prayer*?—that blessed, free port of Heaven which we never enter, whatsoever may be the burden of our tempest-tossed vessel, without our souls being cheered by the Saviour's ever-renewed assurance—

“IT IS I, BE NOT AFRAID.”

And after such a divine injunction, shall *we* presume to contend with the storm? when HE is there to control it! Edith, at all events, felt that she would not; and having unburdened her heart, and committed her care “to Him who careth for us,” the storm of perplexity and anxiety had been rebuked within her, and she rose up at “peace,” and “still;” assured that whatever conflict she might be called upon to engage in, Heaven would, with the danger, make also a way of escape. Wretched as it is, humanly speaking, to have no earthly guide or counselor, for, verily, there *is* no desolation like it, still, in a spiritual point of view, this seeming bereavement is in reality a blessed and incalculable privilege; for then, like Enoch, we feel that God walks with us. To Him, for fear of falling, we *must* commit our ways; and truly in such fear, “there is great wisdom;” for it keeps our ultimate goal ever in view, making Christ at once our staff, our standard, and our refuge, instead of the world,

with its foolish wisdom! its crooked rectitude! and its *false* weights and measures. An Eastern traveller* has described Mount Ararat as being divided into three regions of different breadths. The first of which is covered with short and slippery grass, and sand, as troublesome as the quicksands of Africa; the second is occupied by tigers and crows; and the remainder, which is half the mountain, is overlaid with snow, which has been accumulating ever since the Ark rested upon it; and these snows are concealed during one half the year in very dense clouds. But one of the chief features of this mountain, is the great gulf which extends nearly half way down it; while across this gulf hangs a cliff, over which a single false step may hurl the traveller into the unfathomable abyss beneath, wherein detached pieces of ice are always rolling with the stunning noise of the loudest thunder. Is not this an exact epitome of the world, and the three stages of human life by which we pass through it? As children, we encounter the first and comparatively trifling, short, slippery grass of embryo passions, and continually-recurring restrictions, which impede our first steps; with the sands of wasted hours ever returning to reproach and irritate us, by preventing our clearly seeing the path before us, when we would gladly progress and no longer loiter by the way. Next, as adults, we arrive at the second division of what may be emphatically called **THE WORLD**, peopled, indeed, with innumerable dangers, in the shape of ferocious animals and birds of prey, ever ready to pounce upon our experience, and to immolate it, and us, to their own necessities or well-being. And lastly, comes the chilling division of age; wherein we are surrounded by the hardening snows of extinct passions, and where all the much loved, though it may be also the much abused **PAST** is irrevocably shut out from us by the dense unfathomable clouds of sin, sorrow, and **DEATH**. While every weary step that we have taken in attaining this point has been

* Sir R. K. Porter.

marked by the loosening and detachment of some spot of earth on which we rested! and to which we vainly clung, *they* being hurled before us into the eternal gulf beneath! sending to some, in the stupendous groans of their dissolution, a timely warning; and to others, NOTHING! but the hollow, cold agony of a too late remorse. Oh! would it not then be better from the first, to look above and beyond all these slippery paths of danger and of disappointment; to the safe summit, upon which the Ark of God's everlasting covenant still rests as *really*, though not as visibly, as it did upon the Ararat of old?

At least, happily for Edith, she thought so; and therefore she now waited, with calm resignation, for the man whose fetters she had shaken from her mind, but whose influence over her still, was the creating of that sort of cataleptic powerlessness which serpents are said to exercise over their victims, and which for want of a better definition we have misnamed, "fascination." Mrs. Dunbar had gone to Christy's—for like most very old ladies who cannot long want anything, and are therefore apt to fancy that they want everything, she was much addicted to auctions, and all other marts of modern merchandise. The Archdeacon, as we have seen, had gone down to the Abbey; for as one of its prebends, he thought it only right that it should appear to require his presence, whether it did or not; and as Edith had given no orders, pro or con, about being visible, she knew Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars would be sure to be admitted. And now to return to that personage; he had no sooner entered St. James's Park by Storey's gate, than at the very beginning of the mall (of which the large bay windows of Archdeacon Panmuir's house commanded a full view) than he began to regulate his look, walk, and whole deportment. His ideas of love—(we beg pardon for the profanation of the name)—at least his ideas of succeeding with women, were most bellicose; for, as in war, he thought that everything depended upon stratagem and tactics, so in love making he opined that every move should be caculated. Such hard tasks does the

hired Professor Art set his pupils in that particular class of human knowledge; whereas their indulgent Alma Mater Nature teaches them all its rudiments with a look, and bribes them to the solution of its hardest problems with the sweets of intuition. But poor Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was an individual, and a universal orphan; for having lost his parents while yet young, and quarrelled with his guardian NATURE, from his first onset in life, she had ended by disinheriting him; so that there was no intercourse between them. It was upon this system of calculation, that he had decided upon walking upon this identical morning, in preference to any other mode of conveyance; for walking, as Mademoiselle Anatole, a fair friend of his, and a charming Coryphée, had told him, if it cannot always give a colour, it at least always makes the complexion clearer, and perhaps he had sufficient self-knowledge to feel that he required a little clearing, if not a great deal! For the last ten minutes he had been sorely perplexed in his deliberations, as to whether he should, in accosting Edith, adopt the reproachful, the tender, the desperate, or the despairing lover tone; but terminated this debate with an

“Oh—! d——n it! one can never tell beforehand what one will or will not do. On these occasions everything must grow out of, and depend upon, circumstances; and all pre-concerted speeches and lines of conduct are found, like those things which one’s servant is sure to pack up so carefully in travelling—not wanted, while what is, is never forthcoming.”

And with this truism, the clever man arrived at Samuel Panmuir’s door, where he gave one quick, impatient, yet tremulous ring; for it was one of his theories always to study effect for the unseen eyes and ears that might be evidencing his proceedings; which he had condensed into an aphorism, upon a former occasion, when having remonstrated with Mr. Cæsar Coakington upon the muffism of walking down St. James’s Street, on a gusty day in September, in a rough, and somewhat shabby, pilot coat. A proceeding which that gentleman had defended, by saying—

"Pooh ! my dear fellow, there is nobody in town now."

To which the clever man replied,—“Pardon me, my dear Coakington, but your reason is as shallow as an Italian river in July ; for be assured, that all places, that is, all thoroughfares, are at all times crowded with invisible lookers on and listeners, as wherever there are houses, there are sure to be both.”

For in the orthodox and systematic charlatanism of his highly cultivated intellectual, and totally neglected moral education, there was no theorem of life, no psychological phase of ideality, no chemical, no mechanical, electrical, or mathematical bubble, which possessed sufficient semblance of truth to give currency to their ephemeral reigns—whose phenomena he had not deeply studied, and whose component, or conflicting particles he had not carefully analysed. Nay ; even to those cabalistic miasmas which occasionally exhale from Nature’s more occult laboratories to the surface of our social system, to confound our reason, and to mystify our faith ;—he had attempted to penetrate into their arcana, but never beyond, into their CANA. Content, in his ceaseless excavations of Nature’s hidden treasures to clear away the errors of former ages, that psycho-geological rubbish of time, and flood them with the light of *this* world, without ever looking

“Through Nature up to Nature’s God !”

Having rang, he put up his right hand to his right whisker—not so much to test the skill of Clarke’s morning’s work, as in some sort to dishevel that *chef d’œuvre*. “Now for it !” thought he, terminating with a caress to his chin ; to borrow the celebrated saying of Bossuet, upon one of his contemporary’s apostacy—

“Dictate to me as unto Job. *Verba dolore plena !*” Adding aloud, as Railton opened the door—

“Is the Archdeacon within ?”

“No sir, he is not ; he’s been gone out about a quarter of an hour.”

"Oh, indeed! Then is Mrs. Dunbar at home?"

"Mrs. Dunbar is out, too, sir; for the carriage was ordered at twelve."

"Miss Panmuir out, too?"

"Well—no, sir. I rather think Miss Panmuir is in; at least she did not go out with Mrs. Dunbar."

"Jefferson, is Miss Panmuir at home?" said he, calling to a footman who was carrying down a tray of day-before flowers, which had just been replaced by fresh ones.

"Yes; Miss Panmuir is in the drawing-room."

"Oh, Miss Panmuir is in, sir. Will you please to walk up stairs, sir?"

And, preceded by Railton, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars leisurely traversed the hall, and ascended to the drawing-room.

"Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars," announced Railton, opening wide the door. But, as a servant's absence never was yet more especially desired, but what, of *course*, a newspaper required to be put straight, a blind to be arranged, or the fire to be stirred, Railton now found it necessary to follow the clever man into the room, to perform the two former of these little supererogatory works, to Edith's great relief, and to her visitor's infinite annoyance.

"A charming day, is it not?" said she, in the most perfectly unembarrassed tone, after having shaken hands with him. While Railton was first drawing up, and then drawing partially down, one of the blinds, so as to make the purple and gold splendours of an Indian pheasant's tail find its proper level; which, from the blind having been somewhat awry, had appeared to rise majestically above the bird's head, as if it had been a dowager dressed for court.

"Charming! indeed, *too* charming," echoed Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, plunging such an admiring and undaunted gaze into the very deepest recesses of the pupils of Edith's eyes, that her cheeks, from the soft, delicate, maiden blush tint that they had been, became like two deep-dyed damask roses:

The clever man cast a furtive glance at Railton and the

pheasant, and thought (though no sportsman) that *he* could have bagged ten brace of real ones at a *battu* in half the time that Samuel Panmuir's fat butler had been wrestling with that illuminated effigy. At length, Railton had not only

"Adorned the *tail*,"

but also

"Pointed a moral,"

by turning down a scandalous trial, in a morning paper, and showing up the leading article. But as it is never safe to risk any sort of encounter with the press, but after a Parthian fashion, immediately following this latter proceeding, he wisely effected his retreat.

No sooner had the door closed upon Railton, than Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had flung himself at Edith's feet, and seizing both her hands, which he covered with kisses, and held so tightly within his grasp that she in vain endeavoured to withdraw them. But never had he (to borrow one of his own *scientific* terms) made "*a falser move*;" for indignation at such an unprelaced and unauthorized proceeding gave to the timid girl, who otherwise might not have had the nerve to inflict the slightest pain, the courage of a lion, and the resolution of a stoic.

"I beg, sir," said she haughtily, "that you will instantly rise and release my hands. Nothing ever has passed, *or ever can pass*, between us" (and she emphasized the last words), "to authorize your offering me such an affront; for in no other light can I consider your present conduct."

"*Nothing!* has ever passed between us!" repeated he, suddenly dropping her hands, starting to his feet, and grasping his own hair like a madman. "Good heavens, Edith! I beg your pardon, Miss Panmuir; and do you, can you call the hoarded, burning, maddening, all-absorbing love, the wild, idolatrous, and exclusive devotion of four long years, nothing? *You*, who have been at once the impetus and goal of all my labours, the Polar star towards which I steered through every storm! *You*,

the varied, yet harmoniously blent fascinations of whose beauty—a beauty which knows neither an equal nor a fault—who have been above my every earth-born cloud and sorrow, the rainbow tints that spanned the arch of Hope's bright distant heaven! *You*, who have been to me the giver of light and life, the sun of my system, expanding and fructifying in me the germs of a latent intelligence! For, till I knew *you*, I had no ambition; mine was the mere low, aimless, grovelling instincts of reptile life! Your smile it was that gave to my spirit the first chrysalis intimation of its wings; for then it was I felt how high it must soar before it could attain, or at least before it could aspire to, such perfection! If toil and study have anticipated the work of time, and brushed youth's gloss and bloom more even from my heart, than from my cheek, do not suppose that I made this sacrifice to the opinions, or for the ovations, of men; for never would I have cared to hear my name repeated by the trumpet-tongued voice of Fame, but that it might be echoed by the mass; and that those echoes might be to *you* so many memories of, and messengers from *me*. Fool! fool! that I was; since it seems that, while *you* were *my* all, my past, my present, and my future! *I* was nothing, absolutely nothing, not even a passing thought in your existence. And yet I *had* fancied—nay more, I had *hoped*—and hope, in love's fanaticism, is the happiest part of *certainty*—its anticipation. Yes, I *had* hoped, from the flattering opinion you expressed of my books, and from the interest you *appeared* to take in their success, that their author had not been so totally indifferent to you."

These last words were uttered in a broken and scarcely articulate voice; and at their conclusion Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars covered his face with his hands, and sank down upon a Napoleon causeuse, leaning his head despairingly against the arm of it. While poor Edith, who had no suspicion that such passionate protestations could be nothing more than practised perjuries, began to fear, though scarcely to feel, that she had done this man a grievous wrong, and had been, though very uninten-

tionally, the cause of the human wreck before her; for at that moment, such was the rôle, that he looked to perfection. So seating herself upon the other side of the causeuse, and not sorry for the well-stuffed barrier that serpentine between them, she said, in so gentle and contrite a voice, that it would but have increased his anguish had it been real, and not savoured infinitely more of resentment than regret—

“I do assure you, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrara, that no one can be a greater admirer of your works than I am, or take a greater interest in their well-merited success; and I have not only been most grateful, but much flattered, by your very kind attention, in always affording me an opportunity (insignificant and little worth as my judgment is) of taking the initiative in the sentence which popularity has awarded them. But, as I never had the vanity to suppose that you cherished for me, individually, any deeper sentiment, as you never till to-day gave me any intimation of such being the case, you will, I hope, acquit me of either having encouraged, or trifled with, a feeling which, however I may be, and am, grateful to you for entertaining towards me, I ignored till now, and which I now frankly tell you I cannot reciprocate.”

“No, I never before bared my heart to you,” he exclaimed, suddenly uncovering, and turning his face towards her, which was actually livid, swollen, and distorted with suppressed rage—“because I felt that I had no right to ask *you*, for whose overwhelming beauty nature appeared to have ordained a diadem as a dower, to share the uphill struggle of a poor man. I felt that I ought at least achieve a POSITION, where as upon a befitting altar, I might place the love which I presumed to offer you; or my aunt’s death, an event likely to occur from one month to another, might, in a pecuniary point of view, have enabled me to break a silence which was to me the realization of the fabled tortures of Prometheus and Tantalus combined. But this event not occurring, I was continually compelled to roll the stone back upon my heart; till now that you begin to

mix in society, and that I hear of nothing but you, and see you surrounded by admirers who, at least, in a worldly point of view, have more pretensions to, and chance of success than I have, though in deep, deep love, and unalloyed devotion, they never can approach me within ten thousand sacrifices! But, seeing them with their costly chances against my poor love, I could endure it no longer; silence became suicide, and I rushed here this morning determined to set my fate upon a cast, and end this fearful, this too unequal struggle, Edith! without a sigh, without a pang. You have pronounced my doom; but with my last breath I will bless and thank, for it is a boon to die for, and by you, rather than accept the impossible alternative of living without you."

This last stroke, though as flimsy, was also as fine, as the cobweb cambric with which Edith now wiped her eyes.

"Ha!" thought he, "the spell works, for she already wavers."

And with this reflection he resolved upon another *coup d'état*, and again flung himself at her feet, but this time studiously avoided taking or even touching her hand, by keeping his own clasped in the most imploring manner.

"Oh! Edith," he exclaimed, "you have made me desperate: beware how you leave me so. You little know, and you cannot even imagine, in the nicely-poised equator of your own pure and palatine organization, the fearful extremes of evil that deep, passional, and wayward natures like mine are capable of; when the anchor of their last hope is weighed, and they are sent adrift without chart or compass, to buffet with the ruthless tempest of their own ungovernable despair! Edith! Edith! mercy! It is for more than life I am pleading; it is for *my salvation*. As you value your own soul, beware and pause ere you peril mine."

"I do, I have paused," sobbed Edith; "and what a shameful, what an iniquitous return it would be in exchange for all the devotion you have expressed for me, to give to your pleadings nothing but the hollow consent of words. Nothing but love can requite

love ; and—and I must repeat it, *I do not love you*. For it is better to *seem* unkind, than to *be* cruel ; and what cruelty is there like deceit, when affection is the trust it selects for its victim ! ”

“ You do not love me ! ” slowly repeated Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, in a hollow, extinct voice, and with a pale, wandering, haggard look, as, grappling with the arm of the sofa for support, as if climbing a rock to save himself from a physical, instead of a figurative shipwreck, he again tottered to his feet, taking care to untie one of the long ends of his wispy black cravat, which gave the finishing touch to his appearance of utter devastation, before he tightly folded his arms, and again repeated—

“ You do not love me ! But oh ! Edith, you have not said that you cannot love me ! I do not, indeed I do not, wish to wrest your love from you ; though doubtless you think I do ; from the manner in which I was hurried away this morning on first seeing you by a thousand conflicting tortures. Oh ! no, I would rather win it. Only try for a few months if you cannot love me ! As Omnipotence, out of the void, *willed* the creation, so shall your will re-create me. Though my mind be now a chaotic pandemonium, hint but a fault, and it shall disappear. In a very few months my aunt may—nay, in the course of nature, she *must* succumb to the malady that is so rapidly undermining her constitution. Edith, give me one hope to live upon, that you will then be mine ; at least that till then, you will not listen to any other ? ”

“ No,” said Edith firmly ; “ even if I loved you I would not give you any conditional promise of uniting my fate with yours, at your aunt’s death ; whom I have always heard, has been a most kind and liberal relative to you ; for I think no blessing could attend a marriage, where death was waited for to deck the altar.”

“ There, there, enough ! ” almost shrieked he, stopping his ears as if a whole park of artillery had suddenly been discharged in them. “ One would think that all hell had been set on, to torture me ! ”

Edith, not at all perceiving what connection her last words could have with the terrible excitement he had manifested on hearing them, calmly added—"I thank you for delegating to me a supposititious control over your actions, and influence over your conduct; and if you have faults (as who is there that has not?) I hope, sincerely hope, that for your own sake, seeing them, you will try to mend them. But as far as I am concerned (besides having no faith in any woman's power over masculine errors) I would prefer reversing the office of censor; for if I married, I should like to look up to my husband, and would rather that he corrected *my* faults, provided that he did so in love, and justice, without any admixture of temper or caprice."

Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars groaned. He was fast cursing Edith in his heart, as the only woman he had ever met that

"Flattery could not fool."

But he also saw that the moment had arrived when he must play his last stake; so throwing his eyes up to the ceiling, which made an excellent substitute for heaven to a man so little acquainted as he was with that locality, he exclaimed, clasping and wringing his hands, with a look of almost agonized solemnity—

"MY POOR DONALD! It was *your* last wish, and my first hope!—bear witness, with all the other angels!—how it would have been the study of my life to have made hers happy, would she but have confided to me that sacred mission."

At this allusion to her brother, and this solemn appeal to his now unfettered spirit, Edith's tears flowed hot, and fast—

"You *were* his friend," sobbed she, putting out her hand to Ferrars, "and as such, I must ever be yours, but more I cannot be; the very memory you have invoked forbids it; for if he wished me to marry you, of course he wished me to love you. How, then, dare I ask him now to look down upon such a sacrilege as my marrying you without would be?"

She had scarcely uttered these words, before carriage-wheels

were heard on the gravel beneath the window, followed by a loud ring—

"You had better," said Edith, lifting it from the sofa, and holding it towards him, "put on your cravat."

A feat which he performed wonderfully well for a man in so distracted a state; saying rapidly after he had done so—

"Miss Panmuir, will you at least answer me one question truly; and without the slightest equivocation or *arrière pensée*?"—

"If I answer it at all," said she, with the slightest possible inflection of *hauteur* in her voice, "I shall of course answer it with truth, and without that meanest of all species of falsehood, equivocation."

"Tell me, then, on your honour, are you engaged to that Mr. Lancaster; or has he proposed for you?"

A sudden, though transient flush lit up Edith's cheek; quite as much at the term, "*that* Mr. Lancaster," as at the question itself.

"Really, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars," said she, "you forget yourself; therefore I must remind you that I am *not* bound to answer such questions."

"Oh! you need not; I see it all; I could have taken my oath of it."

"Then would you have perjured yourself," said she; "as I am *not* engaged to Mr. Lancaster, for he never proposed for me."

"For he never proposed for you!" echoed the other, with one of his horrible yelling laughs. "Oh! as that is the only barrier to the engagement, permit me to congratulate you; for, depend upon it, it will soon be removed," said he, bowing down to the ground, preparatory to rushing out of the room, as he now heard Mrs. Dunbar's voice on the stairs; and past her he would have hurried as unceremoniously as an express train, only that old ladies never will let anything pass, from an observation to an ourang-outang.

"Ah! how d'ye do, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars!" said she, impeding his flight by laying her hand upon his arm, as he was rushing past her. "Always in a hurry; always in a hurry! Ah! that's the way with young people. Going down to the House I suppose?"

"Yes, my dear madam," replied he, eagerly clutching at the surmise: "a railway committee, for which I am already a quarter of an hour late."

"Just like me at Christy's!—the most lovely green china monkey knocked down to Lady Mabel Malden five minutes before I arrived; but then, poor thing, it will be a great comfort to her, she having lost her husband."

"Would," thought Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, who kept impatiently biting his lips, "that this d—d monkey had served you as that sensible living monkey did Dr. Young's tragedy, and should have dealt with his 'Night Thoughts!'"

At length the old lady, feeling a draught from the hall door, began to have great consideration for the railway committee, and said—

"Well, good-day, good-day; I won't detain you from your committee. But do get them to make the railways less dangerous and less noisy."

"The moment *your* wishes are made known on the subject, depend upon it those highly necessary alterations will be made," said he, this time escaping in good earnest. He had no sooner drawn a long breath in the open air, and found himself once more in the Park, than, clenching his hands, and casting his eyes up at the window of the room in which he had left Edith, he muttered, with a look that Mephistophiles might have envied, but despaired of imitating—

"You have rejected, but you have *not escaped me!*"

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION XI.

"Remember me, oh, my God, for good!"—*Neh. xiii. 31.*

"Bright shines the sun—play, beggars, play;
Here's scraps enough to serve to-day."—*Frank Davison.*

"To mortal men great loads allotted he;
But of all packs, no pack like poverty."

Robert Herrick's Aphorisms.

PLEASE, marm, do give me a half-penny for playing, "Pop goes the weasel."

"Drat the weasel! and you too! What's the use of weasels popping, I should like to know, when the men have all become foxes, is my belief; for *they* never pop now—pack of lazy, howdacious, good-for-nothink, hobstropolis fellers!"

The above charitable, and uncharitable, dialogue took place over a somewhat extensive puddle leading to the pavement, in that charming *locale*, Tooley Street, in the Borough, between a young gentleman with a crownless hat, sunburnt light hair, naked feet, and a sharp, keen, hungry look, as if the file of starvation was gnawing him continually; and an immense quantity of black crape and bombasin, which had just advanced one Leander of a foot that was attempting to cross the Hellespontic puddle aforesaid, in order to reach the Hero who had implored her charity through the medium of a very asthmatic set of pandean pipes, from which he had been endeavouring to

make the weasel pop, and whose shrill squeaks were indeed sufficient to have made a whole colony of weasels pop to the Antipodes.

"Hand how hold are you, pray?" said the black crape to the pipes, as soon as she had reached terra-firma.

"Joe, the ostler at the Tabard, says as I be rising ten next grass."

"Well then, hif you're ten, you're a getting a big boy, and more shame your mother don't send you to school, hinstead hof letting hon you be habout the streets with them plagues of pipes, perfect nuisances I calls 'em."

"I haint got no mother; she died in the Union, Joe says, the night as I was born."

"And haint you got no father, heither?"

"No, I never had no father; leastways Joe says as my father was a gentleman, and that's the same thing as having no father."

"Ha! poor little feller! gentleman, indeed! blackguards! I call 'em. But what's your name?"

"I haven't got no real name belonging to me, but they calls me Union Jack, on 'count of the Union being the only relation I knows anything about; and Jack, 'cause an old sailor with two wooden legs, as used to go about the streets in a bowl, allowed me a penny a day while he lived; but *he* died last winter." And the boy brushed a tear from his eye with his ragged sleeve.

"Well, but this Joe, has you calls him, the *lostler* hat the Tabard, don't he know nothink about you? hand haint he good to you?"

"Oh, yes, Joe is very good to me; he lets me sleep in the loft on a good bundle of hay every night, beside his own bed; and when he brings Boxer his supper, he always takes the best bits of meat out of it for me, with any other scraps that he can get. But Joe is very poor himself, and his old father and mother have got into trouble lately, something about a 'lection, and

his father has got a bad leg and can't work, so Joe 'lows him all he can, and Joe it was bought me these pipes, that I might try and earn something for myself, for I'm afeared of osses, and can't do much about the stable beyond carrying a pail of water or so for Joe."

"And how come this Joe to know you, for he seems a good sort of man?"

"Joe! he's a regular brick! that's his ginral character; but the way he know'd me was, that he kept company with my mother, and they was to have been married—only he says when I was born that prevented it, but that it shall never prevent his doing all he can for me."

"Ha! poor man! he seems to 'ave jist sich another feeling, tender *art* has poor dear Mr. Bousefield 'ad! Do you think has you could clean knives, and shoes, and run o' herrands, hand such like, hif so be has you was taken hinto a lady's fam'ly, and given your food and lodging, I don't say wages, hat least till you can do somethink more to earn them. But *my* lady is very charitable, very good to the poor, and would do more so had she the means.—Ah! well, that's neither here nor there; but hif as I hears a good character hof you from this here Joe, of the Tabard, hand I was to take you, I'm sure *my* lady would give you a suit of clothes."

At these joyful tidings, poor Union Jack's eyes actually sparkled. He was sure he could clean knives, and shoes; and as for errands, whenever Joe sent him of one he always said he was back before he thought he had had time to get to the place he had been sent.

"Well," said Mrs. Bousefield, excavating from her profound pocket a black leather purse, with a steel clasp, and from it presenting Jack with the munificent sum of sixpence, which he seemed to think quite equivalent to having been to, and returned from, the Diggings,

"Will you go hof a herrand for me now?"

"Aye, that I will, marm, to the world's end and back," said the grateful Jack.

"*Hit's honly* to number six down that 'ere court, hup four p'r o' stairs, to one Maurice Roberts who works has a shoe-maker. Poor dear Mr. Bousefield hand I 'ave employed him for years and years, his work his so good, hand his shoes and boots, two shillings a pair cheaper than hany where helse. Well, you just go and tell him that Mrs. Bousefield, for whom he 'ave worked for so many years, as well as for her late usban, and might 'ave halso worked for her six dear hinfants;—but the Almighty knows best! that Mrs. Bousefield, you tell him, thinks hit *very hodd* that her two p'r o' boots, hordered more than six weeks ago, his not done yet. I'd go myself, and give it *him well*, but that I hear there has been a deal hof hillness about hin the Borough, hand I'm *that* low, hand *that* nervous, that hany body might knock me down with a feather!"

Union Jack, who had opened wide both his eyes, and ears, and kept them on the full strain, to take in not only the pith but all the salient points of this oration, now exclaimed, as he doffed his crownless hat, to scratch the back part of his head—

"Why, marm, Maurice Roberts be Joe's father; and as I told you, he have had a bad leg, through a brickbat as was throw'd at it by one of the blues, at the last Frothington 'lection; and that's the reason, no doubt, as your boots aint done; for it's little or no work he's been able to do since."

"Ah! those 'orrid 'lections!" said Mrs. Bousefield—"not but what in *our* way of business, they had *used* to be very good things, but *now*, I'm sure I can't see no use in 'lections and parliaments, hunless it is to make laws to purtect the devil, and keep him uppermost in all things. Well, *you* tell Roberts I'm sorry for his haccident, but should be glad to ave my boots."

Union Jack vanished down the court, leaving Mrs. Bousefield in the street; who, having "come all over in one of them dreadful heats!" leaned against the lamp-post, and set in for

a long reverie, upon that "light of other days!"—"poor dear Mr. Bousefield!" in order to while away the time till her messenger returned. And she had not long resuscitated from the ashes of her phoenix-like memory, into the triune glories of wife, mother (?), and landlady, when a somewhat unusual thing in Tooley Street, one of Baxter's unexceptionable cabriolets, perfectly appointed, dashed round the corner, and pulled up at the curb-stone, within a hundred yards of the window. From this vehicle Harold Lancaster now alighted; and throwing the reins to the groom, walked on, looking inquiringly up and down the houses, on either side; and then taking a card case out of his pocket, he referred apparently to a written address on the back of one of them, and while he stopped to read it—

"Poor dear Mr. Bousefield, and the six dear hinfants," (which never came off!) were again consigned to the "silent tomb."

"Well, *that's* my *highdears* of a 'andsome man," soliloquized Mrs. Bousefield, as she hastily cleared the "*first heat*" from her face, with the large pocket handkerchief, and then half lowering the black crape drop-scene, put herself in battle array.

"Perhaps," said he, advancing towards her, and taking off his hat with as much respectful courtesy as if she had been a duchess, "you can have the goodness to tell me whereabouts in this street a man of the name of Maurice Roberts lives, who works as a shoemaker, not in a shop but in some private house. My direction says, No. 6, but I don't see any No. 6."

"I shall be most proud and 'appy, sir, to show you the way," responded Mrs. Bousefield, with her best Fox and Fiddle curtsay. "He was a man, was Roberts, as was once exceeding well to do in the world; hand 'ave worked for me hand my late 'usban, poor Mr. Bousefield, for a many years." (Here the pocket handkerchief was again ordered on active service, and had a skirmish with the corners of her eyes.) "But hevry one 'as their hups hand downs hin this world, hand none hof us knows the hins and houts hof 'em but them has 'as to go through

em. Hit his down this here court, sir, hand hup four pair of stairs, sir,—I should say by no means a place befitting for a gentleman, has is a gentleman like yourself to go to;—but hif you will allow me, who his honly a servant, though once in a very large way hof business, has a married ootman, I shall be very 'appy to take hany message for you to Roberts, sir."

"Thank you,—I'm extremely obliged to you; but it is a commission with which I have been entrusted, and therefore I must execute it myself. But as you have been good enough to tell me where I am to go, I don't see why I should encroach further on your time, by giving you the trouble of accompanying me," concluded he, with another bow, quite as graceful and as well-bred as his former one; but this time intended for a farewell salutation.

Alas! how little are philosophers any more than fish able to calculate their chances of escape; and what a captured salmon or greyling is in the way of utter helplessness against the not-to-be avoided destruction of Walton's mystical receipt of ivy juice,—so was any ill-fated mortal of the male sex, once hooked by Mrs. Bousefield!

"Ho! dear sir, I could not think of letting hon you find your way alone, hup them 'orrid dark stairs—the dingiest, *screakingest* things has hever was. I hought to know something hof the dismals, 'aving buried a good 'usband and six dear hinfants; but in burying a 'usband! there is that peace which the world cannot give, hand life hever-lasting to look to,—wherhof going up them stairs of Maurice Roberts there haint nothing to look to hexcept breaking hon one's neck."

"An additional reason," said Lancaster with a smile, "why I should not risk yours as well as my own."

But seeing that Mrs. Bousefield's resolves were like the decrees of fate, irrevocable! he, with true good-breeding—that adaptive courtesy which descends to inferiors, quite as *scrupulously*, as it ascends to superiors, or equals, slackened his own

so as to fall in with her loitering, gossiping pace, as she led the way down the court where Roberts lived.

In truth she had not exaggerated, either the obscurity or the insecurity of the miserable stairs leading to the poor shoemaker's garret; for in an inverse ratio, as much as golden wealth pinnacled through luxury, and refinement, pampers the senses of its votaries, so does the witch Poverty punish those of her victims, through privation and all the offal of existence!

"It his deplorable dark, to be sure," murmured Mrs. Bousefield, elevating her becraped petticoats full three inches higher, as she stopped, ostensibly to take breath, at the first landing, where the daylight was in pursuit of an entrance under difficulties, through a window, whose panes had lost their original transparency and become opaque with the unmolested smoke and dirt of years, but through which a faint ray still struggled, sufficient, the widow thought, for "*any man as had the use of his eyes*" to see what "*poor dear Mrs. Bousefield used to call an uncommon neat foot and hancle; hand sutenly 'aving lived with the Dowager Countess of Coddlecat for so many years, he ought to know what's what!*"

But Mr. Lancaster apparently did *not*, doubtless from not having the same advantages; for, on turning suddenly round, he beheld his looks sent on like *avant couriers*,—to the next landing with a slight expression of impatience, as if but for the impeding mass of weeds before him, his feet would also have franchised that additional space. But out of the dark crucible of adverse circumstances, the pure ore of good is ever being wrought; and oh! Bousefield! notwithstanding that thou hadst lived and died under the aggravated patronymic of JEDEDIAH!—still, all things in nature and in art were ever conspiring to offer fresh ovations to thy manes, for all things made the memory of thy disconsolate widow

"More fondly turn to thee,"

and even on the present occasion, she observed to herself with

A sigh, as she reached the second landing, and lowered the standards of woe, the three inches she had before raised them—

"Ha! hit may be all very well has far has happearances and houtward show goes; but hin *real* judgment hand taste, and knowing what his due to a 'ooman, hin the way hof hat-tention—the whole lot on 'em put together, haint worth *one* hof the hairs of poor dear Mr. Bousefield's whiskers—*I know!*"

And thus Bousefield, like "Beauty," drew her

"—— With a single hair!"

When they had at length arrived at the eaves of this miserable house, Lancaster remembering that Mrs. Bousefield had informed him that she "was only a servant," placed a sovereign in her hand, as he turned round to thank and to apologize to her for the trouble he had given her.

"Oh, dear sir!—don't mention it; the trouble's a pleasure, I'm sure; hand has for this"—looking at, without however attempting to return, the money,—for next to gallantry, Mrs. Bousefield considered that gold was the truest test of a gentleman—"there haint the slightest occasion for nothink of the sort. Allow me, sir," added she, advancing a step or two in order to fling open the door; but he prevented her, saying—

"Stop; we had better knock first."

Having done so, a low growl, and then a deep-toned bark, responded to the appeal.

"Down, Eös,—down, sir," said a voice from the room, after which it added—"Come in!"

This room at its highest point was very low, but in one half of it it was impossible for even a moderate-sized person to stand upright, on account of the slanting projection of the roof. Outside a flock bed, covered with a patchwork quilt, and placed against the window for the benefit of the light, lay Maurice Roberts, a dark, sallow man of about five-and-fifty, with thin, partially grey hair, and dark eyes that might have been bright had they not been so deeply sunken in his head. Despite the bad

leg which was evidently the cause of his reclining position, he had on his leather apron, and was at work on a pair of prunella boots, which were doubtless Mrs. Bousefield's. At the foot of the bed stood Union Jack, who had just delivered her message; and who, not to stand with his hands before him, had seized upon a strip of leather which he was busily perforating with an awl, while beside the bed sat Alciphron Murray, who had been attentively listening to a long history of the cause of his misfortunes, which Roberts had been narrating to him; while at his feet Eös lay stretched at full length, his fore paws forming two ramparts for his nose. In the centre of the room, midway between the projecting beam of the ceiling and the bedstead, was Margaret Roberts,—Maurice's wife,—a had-been pretty woman, with no remains of good looks, beyond rather delicate features, very pale and much wrinkled cheeks, and eyes that looked as if they had cried all their colour out of them. Her figure, as is generally the case in persons of her class, was the worst part of her; for, although thin to attenuation, she had one of those enormously thick, flat waists which only common women manage to achieve, and its shortness of course added to its circumference. Nevertheless, her dress (consisting of a blue-and-white cotton gown, and a check apron) was scrupulously clean, with the exception of an old *çi-devant* black velvet bonnet, now of a fuzzy brown, as if turning into moss, perched on the top of her head, and of that cross-breed shape, between a spout and a coal-scuttle, peculiar to charwomen. In this *couvre-chef*, more substantial than elegant, Margaret Roberts was now bending over a consumptive fire in the narrow, rusty grate, and peering occasionally into a tin saucepan, to superintend the progress of a preparation that M. Soyer would not exactly have denominated *purée aux—pommes de terre*, although a portion of that vegetable entered into its composition; the *fond* of which consisted in a couple of handfuls of oatmeal, in about a quart of water, to which she every now and then added, from a wooden bowl beside her, as many handfuls

of raw potato parings: while all the attention she could spare from her culinary occupation she divided equally between a clean calico shirt, that was hanging to air over a velveteen jacket on a low wooden nursing chair, and a pepper-and-salt worsted stocking she was knitting. Save the bed, three chairs, and a largish sized deal table, other furniture the garret had none, with the exception of a large, old, plain, smooth oak box, more like those used for flour bins in country cottages: and above which was a deal shelf, containing four delf plates, two blue mugs, a cracked teacup and saucer, two knives and steel-pronged forks, two iron spoons, a blue teapot—the cover tied on with a piece of twine,—and a tin match-box, forming a ‘candlestick, into which was stuck about four inches of rush-light. While over the mantelpiece was one flat-iron, a small Italian iron, a kettle-holder made of brown stuff, and a large, square, and very plethoric-looking pincushion, the only well-fed looking thing in the place, for all the world like a green baize and bran model of an alderman, who had been made a Poor Law Commissioner.

Mrs. Bousefield had originally intended protecting Mr. Lancaster through his interview with the Roberts's, but no sooner had she caught sight of Murray, than “*coming all over in one of them terrible heats!*” and at the same time feeling a tendency to that peculiar species of feathery epilepsy to which she was so subject, she rushed down the stairs, to use her own expression, “like a cat from a larder—with the cook after it,”—and made the best of her way to “The Tabard,” to enquire into Union Jack's antecedents, and recruit her spirits with a glass of port wine, which was what “poor dear Mr. Bousefield, who was a man has understood what females required, always used to prescribe for any of her complaints, whether mental or physical. But though she was that weak, and *that low*, that she did not know how to bear herself, she *must* say she *should* like to know what could take a gentleman of that appearance and manner

to the Roberts's. For though ladies *was* hexceedingly charitable sometimes, sending their maids, hand heven going themselves to such places; gentlemen *was* quite different, considering that *hif* they gave their money *that* was quite enough, has indeed *she* thought it was, without poking hinto such low-lived places. However, she must come hinto Southwark the next day to see hafter that hare charity boy, has she 'ad promised to do for him; hand her name was not Sushanner Bousefield hif she did not find it all out."

Leaving Mrs. Bousefield to pursue her way to "The Tabard" alone (for as she used to say to "poor dear Mr. Bousefield" upon the rare occasions that she *did* take a glass of port wine, she "hated people to be following *hon*, *hand* looking *hat* her"), we will return to Harold Lancaster. As soon as he had followed the permission to enter, Murray and he, having exchanged salutations, though strangers to each other, and Eös, with that fine tact which all dogs possess for detecting and appreciating those of gentle birth, having sniffed round his boots, and given him an amicable wag of the tail, he drew a letter from his pocket, Margaret Roberts suspending her avocations the while, and curtseying down to the ground; while her husband pulled the front lock of his hair; both of which salutations the new arrival separately returned.

"You'll *ex-cuse* my rising, sir," said Roberts; "but I'm troubled with a bad leg."

"Pray, don't stir on any account," rejoined Lancaster, seeing that he made an effort to advance more to the edge of the bed, "I have merely called at the request of the Duchess of Liddesdale, who received a letter by the post last night from a person signing himself "Joe Roberts, ostler, at The Tabard, Southwark," about a young person of the name of Fanny Parker, who once lived as under housemaid in the Duchess's service.

"Yes, sir," said Roberts, adding with a slight push to enforce his commands, "There, be off, Jack, and tell Mrs. Bouse-

field, that, if possible, she shall have one pair of her boots next week." Jack vanished, much against his will; for since the entrance of that gentleman, he had stood contemplating Mr. Lancaster much with the same breathless wonder and admiration with which for the first time after having climbed to the *Belvedere* one beholds the Apollo!

Seeing that he had produced a letter, and was about to read it, Murray also rose, and prepared to depart; merely saying as he gave Roberts a good-sized but plainly-bound Bible,—

"I don't think you need alarm yourself about that *gentleman's* threats; for his own sake, he will hardly like to stir about the matter. But study this book well—you will find in it all you want, and better counsel, and more comfort than I can give you. Trust to God's Word, and you need not fear any man's *perjury*. Take care of yourself; I'll look in upon you again next week; and Mrs. Roberts be sure to get the things I have written down for his leg; and let him have a little old tent wine."

"Ah! sir, it's easy talking!" said Margaret Roberts, shaking her head, and dropping another curtsy, as Murray, with a parting bow to Mr. Lancaster, followed by Eös, left the room.

"Here, wife," said Roberts, "take care of this here Bible, I'd like to read it oftener, well enough; only I've no time like by day, and can't afford light o' nights."

"No," said she, "it's like ordering of you wine and such like. I should like to know where poor people is to get such things—God help us!" And as she took the sacred volume from her husband's hand, a small folded paper fell at her feet.

"You have dropped something," said Lancaster, stooping to pick it up, and giving it to her. She was some time before her horny fingers could master its flimsy texture sufficiently to open it; when she did so, it turned out to be a £5 note.

"You see God *has* helped you, my good woman," said Lancaster! "and though he may not always do so in this sort of instantaneous and unexpected manner, depend upon it, those

who appeal to Him with constancy and sincerity never do so in vain."

"He has indeed helped us!" cried Margaret Roberts, clasping her hands, and falling upon her knees, as the tears coursed each other down her withered cheeks;—"and, oh! may He also bless that good, kind gentleman whom He has sent to us in our hour of need."

"Amen," responded Lancaster. "And now I will read you this letter which brought me here this morning, and you may be able to give me some further particulars respecting the affair."

"Aye, sure, sir," said Roberts, wiping his eyes with the back of his sleeve; "but I be most ashamed to ax a gentleman like you to sit down in such a poor place as ourn."

Whereupon Margaret flew across the room for the best—that is the least torn—rush-bottomed chair; and after having carefully flipped and dusted it with her apron, was about to bring it over to "*the strange gentleman*," which he prevented, by going for it himself, in order to save her the trouble; and seating himself upon it, he read out

JOE THE OSTLER'S LETTER
TO THE DUCHESS OF LIDDSDALE.

"May it please yr grase—

"Who in course knows nothing of me, but i knowing of a long time as your grase is a good and charitable lady, whose charity is greater than yr rank, and thinks more of being a Christian woman than a great lady, i makes bold—tho' far from being able, to groom a pen as i can a oss, to interseed with yr grase, for a poor hunfortinet little critter, the son of poor Fanny Parker, who as your grases ousekeeper, Mrs. Melvil, can tell you, once lived as under ousemaid with your grase, and was as good a girl as ever was, till the devil got hold of her, calling his self a gentleman, one Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, now a Parliament man, and wat they calls one of the rulers of the

nashun. Poor Fanny then went to the bad entirely; but she was soon sarved out for it—for wen this fine gent got her into trouble he deserted her, and she had to go to the Union, where her sin and sorrow ended in a sun, who is now on the wide world a starving. i tried to keep life and sole in un as long as i could; but this Ferrars, who seems to have been born for the cuss of the poor, got my poor old father into trouble with lies and fals promises at his last Lection, which have throwd him out of work, so i be blijed to low him the little i can. All the paticklers of which lection business yr grase can learn by sending some one to No. 6, — Court, Tooley St. Borough, to see that i aint a telling on you no lies, like them ere begging letter posters, as is continually a being tocket up in the noose-papers. And so not being able any longer to do anything for poor Jack, Fanny Parker's horphin, who in course is not sponsible for his father and mother's misdeeds, i come to implore your grases charity and compassion for him; but seeing as poor Fanny's misfortin can't have no claim upon your grase, but quite tother way, i must inform your grase, that afore i cum a troublin on you, I plied to the proper quarter, I mean to Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars rich ole ant, Lady Mammonton, as ad the bringing on him up, and encouraging him on in all his wickedness; but lor! it was like trying to put pity into the stone walls o' Newgate. She did nothink but hold with her nevey and abuce poor Fanny, calling on her all sorts o' ugly names, saying that poor Henry, as she called her nevey, was only a boy of nineteen, and that Fanny was twenty, so that it must have been all her fault; and begged she might hear no more of her and her workhouse brat. At this my blood began a biligg, so i ups and i tells her for all she was so rich, her money would do her no good, as she could not take it back to the devil with her; and for all she thought herself such a great lady, she was far uglier and a deal more wishus than the Pottimus at the Zoologican Gardens, to leave her *grand nevey* (for sich Jack is by the laws of natur, in spite of all the hacts of parleyment) to die of starva-

tion. At this she was in sich a fury, that she ordered two of her great powdered baboons of footmen to turn me out of the ouse ; but when they attempted to lay a hand upon me, though i hadn't got my pitchfork with me, i soon pitched into them, and scattered 'em right and left like a litter. It is for this reason—cause there aint no good to be got out of those Ferrars's, who is a bad lot, seed, breed, and generation—that I have made bold to hintrude upon your grase, knowing wat a deal your grase has already lent to the Lord, for, as the Bible says, 'Who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord.' i do ope your grase will lend him a little more (for better security there can't be), by doing summut for this poor little destitute Jack ; either by getting of him into some charitable hinstitooshun, which, at all events, is a decent and spectacle sort of starvation, or doing anythink else for him that yr grases goodness may see fit. And if so be as your grase is not offended at my aving made so bold as to have sent you this letter, and is condescending enough to take any notice of it, you will be pleased to send your messenger to No. 6 — Court, Tooley Street, Borrough, which is where my Father and Mother lives, as i should not like the people at the Tabard to know anythink about poor Jack's concerns.

"And now I remain untill death, with every respec, your grases most obedient and most humbel servant,

"JOE ROBERTS,

"Ostler at

"The Tabard Inn, Southwark.

"June 14th, 18—."

"I conclude, therefore," said Mr. Lancaster, as he finished reading this letter, "that you are this Joe Roberts's father, as he herein states ; and the reason the Duchess of Liddesdale asked me to come and inquire into this business was, that the Duke not being here she did not like entrusting the matter to a servant. Sq now tell me all you know about this poor boy, and

I have no doubt but she will do all she can to aid your son in his benevolent intentions towards him."

"Bless you, sir, it's an old story soon told, about poor Fanny Parker;—but that's her child as I sent out when you come in. It's all true what Joe says in his letter about the villany of that Ferrars; but what Joe didn't say is, sir, that he and Fanny Parker kept company eleven years ago, and was to have been married. When this Ferrars, a boy, as his aunt calls him—aye, a mere boy in years, but a regular thorough-going Beelzebub in wickedness; which makes it worse to my thinking—for some gets full-blown in vice at the first starting, so that they never *is* to say, young—being old in wickedness directly. Well, this here Ferrars meets poor Fanny at *Waxhall* or *Creemorne*, or some of the devil's drawing-room places, and if he don't fool the girl into believing that he was a gentleman's walley out on a spree like; and from one thing to another he gets on till he deludes her with a mock marriage; and when he compassed her ruin, he leaves her on the wide world to starve. So the poor creetur had nothing for it but the Union—and there the Lord had compassion on her, and she died. But sin must always have a wictim; and like the sacrifices of the Jews that we reads on in the Bible, it always must be something innocent—a kid, or a lamb, or a child,—and so in Fanny Parker's sin, poor Jack was the wictim."

"I think," interrupted Mr. Lancaster, "that you should rather say, in Mr. Ferrars' sin; for the poor girl seems to have been basely deceived."

"Tit for tat, sir; tit for tat!—for she deceived our Joe, who had like to have died of it; and it was an out-and-out sin to deceive one as doted on the very ground she walked on. And the worst of these sort of sins—indeed of all sins—is, that no one ever can say or guess where the mischief of 'em hends; as soon as you think it have died away, it is sure to break out like the cholera in a fresh quarter. Well, what does Joe do—never able to get this girl o' of his head—but brings Jack from the Union,

home to his mother and me, 'cause we had not too many mouths and too little bread already! But, as he truly said in the midst of all his raving—and we was glad to hear one sensible remark to shew that he had not gone clean out of his mind altogether,—‘Never grumble, mother,’ says he, ‘it’s not the poor child’s fault; and you know what the Bible says—“The merciful shall find mercy.”’ So not being able to gainsay that, we took the child, and kept him till he was old enough to bide in the stable along with Joe. But here was the *onlucky* part of the whole business, sir—for all my misfortins have come through it; Joe not only forbid his mother and me to tell any one who Jack’s mother was; but he makes a grand secret of who his father was, and never could we get it out of him, not even when my missus have been put out with the boy, and to taunt Joe, have said—‘Oh! no doubt, Jack is a great man! for, as we have never heard of any other, of course his father is the man in the moon!’ Still Joe was as close as wax. Well, sir, I never began to be ruined till I began to get on, and tried to get up in the world. As long as I stuck to my last, my last stuck to me; but having saved up a matter of £180, or thereabouts, the devil put it into my head to buy a patch of ground at Frothinton, which made me a £10 voter—and then it was I took to politics and publicus—goose-clubs and free-and-easies—and, in course, neglecting my work, my customers began to neglect me. Till about this time twelvemonth, I was beginning to get a little out at elbows—and if, even then, I’d been said by my missus, and given up the clubs and the politics, and taken ag’in steadily to my work, I might have done well even then; but instead of that—to drive away care, which always bounds back to us like a cricket-ball, when we tries to fling her from us in them there violent sort of ways—what does I do, but live a’most as it were, in the taproom of the ‘Magpie and Stump,’ where the Liberals, as they calls theirselves, had a free-and-easy. And when the ’lection comed on, one Slimeycraft, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars’ *lieyer*, gets hold on me, and tells me that hif so be as I will wote for

Ferrars—which was one and the same thing as woting for liberty! independence, and the rights of the people!—and get as many of my friends at the club to do the same—he would give me £10 for my own wote, and £10 for each wote as I got him. Only I was to be sure and not hint a word of this to mortal, as Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars knowd nothink about it; and, indeed, that he should not account with me for the wotes till after the close of the poll, as the hopposite party had an ugly trick of calling any monies given for wotes beforehand—*bribery*; whereas, what was paid *arter*, only come under the head of *gratitude*. ‘For, Mr. Slimeycraft, sir;’ says I, ‘if this here Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars is such a great man as you says, and such a friend to the people, and all for upholding our rights and *privileges*, and all that—he shall have my wote and welcome, and I don’t want no money for it.’ ‘Tut, tut,’ says the wretch, a quoting Scripture—as we know the devil can do to suit his purposes—‘Tut, tut, man,’ says he, ‘the labourer is worthy of his hire;’ and I assure you when you know more of Ferrars and liberty! you’ll know that he is the very last man to take up a poor mechanic’s time, and benefit by his zealous services, without handsomely remunerating him for it. Besides,’ he says, ‘Roberts,’ says he, ‘in gaining over your friends to the right side, you will be put to some little expense, for you must never flinch from getting them to drink the Liberal member’s health, for I always remark that the polling never goes on with such spirit as when the goes of gin and brandy have not been spared! Well, sir, will you believe that I wor such a hass—as, indeed, most of us £10 woters is—as to swaller all this?—and afore the first day’s polling was over, I had stood treat at the ‘Magpie and Stump’—such was the terrible thirst of liberty! for ale, wine, gin, and brandy! to the tune of £15. But the worst was yet to come, for at the close of the poll, as I and *my* party, as I foolishly called ‘em, was marching in triumph back to the ‘Magpie and Stump,’ to make still greater noodles of ourselves, one of Trueman the defeated member’s party, hurled a brick-bat at random amongst us,

which caught me just in the calf of the leg. 'This effectually sobered me; and though it's only twenty mile from Frothinton to town, I had great difficulty in bearing the motion of the train, and I thought I should have died afore I got home; and the cab from the station cost me four shillings. Nor was this the worst of it; for a man never brings home a hamper of troubles, but what he is sure to find a still larger hamper *there waiting* for him!—and sure enough, when Joe comed in, and *heered* as I had not only give *my* wote and hinterest to Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars; but had got others to do so too, through all of which he had been returned, than Joe goes off just like a madman or a biler that had busted; and then tells us for the fust time all about this here Ponsonby Ferrars; saying, that a month afore her death, Fanny Parker had found out who her betrayer was, and had confided it to Joe, who had vowed to bide his time, and never lose sight of him. 'Well, Joe,' says I, trying to pacify him, 'it's all your own fault for being so close; for if so be as I could have had an inkling who this man was, why, in course, I'd have seen him at the d—l afore he should have had my vote.' Howsever, to make the best of a bad business, it's some comfort to think that we'll have a pretty penny of money coming in, near upon £90, when Slimeycraft scores up.'"

"'Father!' cries Joe, swearing a terrible oath (he poor fellow as never swears), and clenching his fist, which he brought down on the table with the strength of a sledge-hammer, till the few things in the place rattled again—'depend upon it, if you take one farthin of that man's money, you had better hang yourself first; for there will be nearly as great a curse upon it as on Judas's thirty pieces of silver.'

"Of course I didn't want to worry or herritate poor Joe, so said nothink, and let him think I had given up the idear of taking this money; but the next morning when he had gone down to The 'Tabard' (for he had slep' on the flure here that night), and I saw starvation staring us in the face, and a long illness before me, I

wrote a line to Bedford Row, telling him the accident I had had, and saying, but for it I would, as I told him, have given my vote for nothink; but as it was, being now disabled and thrown out of work, I should be very glad of a little money, seeing the charges I had incurred in treating Mr. Ferrars' woters. This letter I gave to my missus, and told her to wait for an answer. She was away a matter of nearly three hours, during which time I had neither fire nor breakfast, not being able to move off the bed. When she came back, she said the gentleman—a nice gentleman! truly—had kep' her waiting a long time, and had then sent out word by his clerk, that it was all right, and he'd call upon me in the arternoon. In course I thought he was coming with the money, and so told my wife to tidy up the place as well as she could. Well, sir, about three o'clock, sure enough he came; but instead of bringing the money, he said, shewing me my own letter,—

“‘What's all this, my good man? Don't you know that bribery at elections is punishable by law?’”

“‘But sir, you promised—nay, sir, you insisted upon giving me £10 for my own vote, and £10 for every other vote that I could get for Ferrars.’”

“At this the wretch grinned in my face in the most aggravating manner, and said—

“‘Well, now really, my good fellow, to look at you I should say you were black, but this must be an optical illusion; for decidedly you must be green, and *very* green, not to know what the commercial value of electioneering promises are!’”

“‘Then,’ said I, quite roused by his villany, ‘if there is any stir made about the bribery that went on at the Frothinton election, I am ready to take my oath of the manner in which you bribed me, and the fool I was to let myself be bribed!’”

“‘Ha! ha!’ laughed this hyena of a *Lieyer*, ‘Take as many oaths as you please, if it is any amusement to you to do so, but recollect this, that Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars’ oath and *my* oath (with witnesses that we have always at our command) would be taken in

any Court of Justice in England, against yours and we'd have you transported for perjury. Besides, just look here, my good fellow,' said the wretch, taking a packet of letters out of his pocket, that seemed much worn and with different post-marks on them, 'not one of these documents are in reality penned by the persons from whom they ostensibly come; and yet, there is not one of the parties purporting to have written them—though morally certain that they had not done so; when made acquainted with their contents, that would not nevertheless be compelled to swear that such was their signature and hand-writing. Now, my good fellow, though not generally known, because not generally resorted to, as weak minds have a prejudice against it, yet this fac-simileing of other persons' writing is as thriving a trade in our great town as any other; therefore don't flatter yourself that your penmanship is so exquisite as to be inimitable, and the moment you swear bribery against me and my honorable client, I shall put in a letter from you accusing yourself of perjury, and saying that you had been bribed by the opposite party to do so; but that your conscience (capital! public word that) would not allow you to go through with it; and I shall even contrive to have this document handed up in open court, as if coming directly from yourself. As for risking your future vote and interest—as it is not very likely that Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars will ever again stand for a little trumpery place like Frothinton—that does not give us much anxiety, and although he and I, have both far too large a stake in the great game of life to, from choice, waste our time in catching minnows, or breaking butterflies on the wheel—yet, if you are not quiet, or if you make any more ridiculous demands upon us, we shall be compelled, in order to rid ourselves of the nuisance, to put a damper on your trade. So take my advice, and stick to your awl, as it is all you have to look to, and as a shoemaker you will find that there is nothing like leather!'

"And so saying, with another laugh, the monster left the room. It was well for him that I could not move, or else I

think he'd have had to go home with a few less of his crafty brains in his head."

"A precious pair of villains, indeed, this Slimeycraft and his client!" groaned Lancaster, for a moment covering his face, as he remembered that the latter was always hovering like a vulture round Edith. "But," added he, "beyond having been swindled out of your vote and your money, and laughed at for your folly by this unprincipled pair,—I quite agree with the gentleman who went away when I came in, that you have nothing further to fear from them, not from any compassion towards you, but out of consideration for themselves. You have certainly paid dearly for the lesson; but not too dearly, if it has taught you that interfering in what we don't understand is at once the surest and most severe manner of tempting Providence; and depend upon it, honest artizans in your sphere are as little competent to manage the tools Politicians employ, to make stepping stones of them, as those fine gentlemen would be to handle, with any degree of success, the implements of your craft. But how about this poor child;—in what way do you think the Duchess of Liddesdale can best serve him?"

"Well, sir, for the present, I should say as he was almost *purvided* for; only to be sure servitude is not an inheritance. But one Mrs. Bousefield, he tells me—a very tidy sort of ooman, that I have worked for these many years—it seems met Jack in the street to-day, and took compassion on him, by promising to get him a *sittivation* as herrand-boy, and such like, with the lady where she now lives. So perhaps, sir, it would be better not to trouble her grace jist at present, if so be at any *futer* time she would have the goodness to *hinterest* herself for poor Jack."

"May be *that would* be the best plan," said Mr. Lancaster; "and then she would have more time to consider what would be the best method of insuring his future welfare. But it seems to me, that your own necessities are the most pressing, so let us see what can be done for them. There is a certain honest

pride which every man, who deserves the name of one, possesses, and which would revolt at the humiliation of alms, and the enervating fetters of dependance; but on the other hand, there is in some positions a yearning for the *assistance* and *support* of our fellows, which every one who is a *Christian* feels God has placed him in this world for, whether it be to *give* or to *receive*; and inasmuch as that we are told on high authority, that '*it is more blessed to give than to receive*,' the giver, contrary to the current opinion in the world, is in reality the debtor. Now, do you think that if I were to hire and pay the rent of a small shop for you, and the wages of three workmen, giving you a certain sum to purchase a stock-in-trade, and to start with, that you could return to, and stick steadily to your business, and at the end of three years refund me an instalment of the original outlay, and so on, annually afterwards, till you were once more free and independent, and the whole business became *bonâ fide* as well as ostensibly *yours*? At the same time—as often with the best intentions and the most unremitting industry, human undertakings are liable to fail—if, upon an examination of your books, and an investigation of your conduct, I found yours had done so, I should make no demands upon you, but consider that we had both been unfortunate in our speculation and must go on a little longer, hoping for better times."

"Sir, sir! I don't understand," said Roberts, with a half ecstatic, half bewildered look, as he took off his spectacles and clasped his hands. Surely it is not possible that you can really mean to——"

But Lancaster interrupted him, by repeating the substance of what he had just said.

"Margaret! a cup of water," gasped the poor mechanic, taking off his cravat, and nearly falling back on the pillow. "Oh! sir," added he, "don't think me ungrateful; it is not—indeed it is not that—but your kindness quite overpowers me,

and my gratitude chokes me; my heart is too full of it, and yet it cannot get further than my throat."

"Come, come, my good fellow," said Lancaster, rising with a smile, "I don't want to have the coroner here, so you must rally, and let me find you all right when I return in a day or two—as I shall do, to know where you have decided upon our taking the shop. And you, too, Mrs. Roberts, you must stir yourself, for you'll have to see about the furniture and other domestic concerns."

Apparently forgetting the cup of cold water she was holding to her husband, the poor creature let it drop from her hand, and splash all about, as she fell upon her knees, exclaiming, "May the Lord in heaven bless you, sir!"

"You cannot kneel to Him too often; but never kneel to any human being," said Lancaster, raising her kindly; and then to avoid their further thanks, he hurried out of the room.

Verily! Omnipotence alone understands the science of the heart's gravitation; for the more it takes upon itself the burdens of others, the lighter it becomes: and Harold Lancaster's had not felt so buoyant for many a long day, as it did when he turned out of that dark, dirty street, from which he had just emancipated two weary spirits, and drove back to Carlton Gardens, radiant with the anticipation of meeting Edith *en petit comité*, at the Duchess of Liddesdale's at dinner, that day.

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION XII.

"Make to yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness."—*Luke*, xvi. 9.

"For the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light."—*Ibid.* v. 8.

"Often what passes for extreme cleverness in the world is nothing more than intense want of principle."

"Le ciel en vous formant, voulut se signaler j'y cousens : mais enfin, vous n'êtes que des hommes."—*GILBERT*.

It was late on Saturday night, or rather early on Sunday morning, when Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' brougham stopped at the Clarendon. He had been at the Opera, but on account of his new rôle of rejected, and therefore, as a matter of course, *dejected* lover, he had taken care not to appear in the *foyer*, but had ensconced himself at the back of the Duchess of Diplomat's box, occupied, on that night, by Mrs. Piers Moncton ; whom, after he had again felicitated on her good fortune, in securing for a governess such a rock of sense ! mountain of learning ! and model of morality ! as Fraulein Göthekant, he had to listen to that lady's individual hopes and fears.

"Oh ! my dear Mithter Ponthonby Ferrarth," said she, "we have had good news at latht : Pierth had a letter from hith father to-day, thaying that hith elder brother, Grantley, ith tho ill at Bruthells that he hath been given over ; and ath to Thir Pierths, in the courthe of nature it ith impothible that *he can* latht long."

"I'm afraid I can't flatter you, my dear Mrs. Moncton, old people *do* stick to life with such inveterate obstinacy; look at my aunt for instance; I'm positively ruined with post-obits. However, you understand, these are things one don't talk about to *every* one; but I know I may rely upon your discretion, and I hope you do not doubt mine; for if any one says to me how pretty Mrs. Moncton looks to-night, but rather pale, I shall say—Ah! poor Moncton has had very bad accounts of his brother, and his *chère petite femme* is a perfect sensitive plant—ha, ha, ha!" "Ha, ha, ha!" re-echoed the lady, and the amiable pair laughed in concert, for full two minutes; the gentleman adding, when their mirth had subsided,—

"The fact is, as I need not tell you, the world is a big baby not yet weaned from its prejudices, and never will be; and the only way one can get it to be quiet, and not pull one to pieces for its amusement, is to talk all sorts of nonsense to it; by so doing, one *may* manage to fare better than Gulliver did with the Brobdiagnag baby, and keep oneself out of its mouth."

"Very true, but you *have* one comfort," said his companion—returning, like all sensible people, to the pounds, shillings, and pence part of their conversation—"and a great comfort it ith, my dear Mithter Ferrarth, that lady Mammonton *doeth* give out publicly, that you are to be her heir, and don't go on angling with your hopeth and fearth, like thome of oneth rich relationth."

"Ah! but still, all this amounts to a *promissory* note, and I much prefer *bank* notes! then too, the piety of old women generally consists in having a *saving* grace—and nothing beyond."

"Well," laughed Mrs. Moncton, "and all the better for those who come after them, without ever having arrived at *that*, or perhaps at any other state of grace, as I suppose Archdeacon Panmuir would tell you—*ex Cathedra*. Dear me, but that Miss Panmuir is very handsome," added she, arranging the focus of her opera glass, so as the better to examine Edith, who,

after dining with, had just come into the Duchess of Liddesdale's box opposite, accompanied by Mr. Lancaster and Samuel Panmuir;—"don't you think so?" concluded Mrs. Moncton, appealing to her companion.

But exclusive of its being one of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' theories, that a man should never praise one woman to another,—for *his* way of flattering the sex was always to libel them—he did not, under existing circumstances, feel the slightest inclination to join in Edith's praises, so he merely replied with a shrug—drawing out every word leisurely—

"Well,—she's—not—*exactly*—my—style—of—woman."

Here, to his great relief, the box door opened, and the Condé de Sotomayor, like a heavy three-decker Dutch skipper, rolled in, followed by Monsieur Charles de la Tour de Nêsle, floating buoyantly like a small life-boat in his wake.

It being an understood thing about town, that Mrs. Piers Moncton and the Condé could always suffice to each other; and, indeed, as far as Sotomayor was concerned, he was more than a *portion pour une*, let that one have been ever so *exigeante*! while with regard to the lady—why

"Man wants but little here below,"

&c., &c., &c.—

which shows what a poor, dear, temperate, easily satisfied animal he is.

As soon as the Hidalgo had with some difficulty shampooed himself into a *fauteuil*, placing his right arm across the back of Mrs. Moncton's chair, so as not to trust entirely to one of such frail tenure for support, the clever man turned to Monsieur Charles de la Tour de Nêsle and said, as he held out one finger to him, at the same time never for a moment losing sight of the Duchess of Liddesdale's box—

"What news, *mon cher*?"

"Well, there really *is* news—Lord Nonmuscle has resigned, and Lord Redby was sent for to Windsor at nine this evening."

"The D——!" muttered Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, adding the next moment—"Have you heard who are to be the members of the new cabinet?"

"Nobody has *heard*, but every one knows. Benaraby, for instance, will at last hang up his gabardine in Downing Street. Coakington, they say, would have been Attorney-General, only Lord Redby is rather at a nonplus about those £15,000 damages that are hanging over him for that Bouverie affair; as he feels it would not be *quite* the best sort of *affiche* for a high legal functionary's *début*."

"Devilish unlucky!" thought Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, pulling his under lip, "that I did not rat *last* year when Benaraby wanted me to do so; but *then* I thought the Whigs were safe for at least five or six years longer. However, I now see why he asked me to sup with him to-night, and there's no use in bothering myself with regrets till I know what I have lost, or what I *may gain*." And he consoled himself with that *ratified* axiom of modern politicians,

"BETTER LATE THAN NEVER,"

and then devoted his undivided attention to watching and scowling at Edith and Mr. Lancaster, in the opposite box, till it was lucky for them that the evil eye is only a chimera! The clock of St. James's Church had just chimed eleven, when Archdeacon Panmuir, with sympathetic punctuality, pulled out his watch, for he never stayed at any public place later than that hour of a Saturday night; and as he was only too happy to leave Edith to the *chaperonnage* of the Duchess of Liddesdale, notwithstanding the drawback of Mr. Lancaster, and moreover had to preach at the Abbey in the morning, he now took his departure. Not that the preparation of his sermons ever gave him much trouble, as, though not exactly in words, yet in spirit, they were for the most part modelled upon those *cordon sanitaire* exordiums of Père Calliot, a Jesuit who used to preach at St. Sulpice, in the time of Louis the Fourteenth, where all the court and *haute noblesse* sat in the body of the

church near the pulpit, while the *bourgeoisie* and common people sat out in the distant aisles ; which caused him invariably to begin his sermons in this fashion—with his hands crossed and pressed upon his breast, looking almost tenderly at the aristocratic mob beneath the pulpit, as he leant forward over it—“ *Mes très chers frères,*”* and then suddenly regaining his perpendicularity, and haughtily flinging back his head as he raised his voice, and pointed with his outstretched forefinger at the plebeian crowd in the distance, while he added, in a shrill, dictatorial voice, “ *et vous autres, canaille de Chrétiens !* ”

So, Samuel Panmuir having wished the Duchess of Liddesdale and Mr. Lancaster good-night, left that scene of worldly dissipation, to prepare to meet *ses très chers frères, et les autres canailles de Chrétiens*, that were to congregate in Westminster Abbey, at eleven the next morning. While Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars resumed his scrutiny of Edith, casting at the same time a retrospective glance at his own career, and lamenting how his youth and inexperience had been sacrificed on divers occasions to the wiles of women !—for it was one of the idiosyncracies of his luckily somewhat unique moral perceptions, to invariably transpose facts, those great first causes of results ! and having begun his career of unchecked profligacy at the age of seventeen, with a stock of astute and cold systematic calculations, that would have been revolting in a sexagenarian debauchee, and which was perfectly appalling in one who had scarcely franchised the white barrier which divides childhood from youth, he had strangely enough assumed that all the cunningly baited snares which he had laid but too successfully for others, had been spread for him : an assumption founded upon the *one* circumstance of his being in reality *young in years*. At least he had not originally entertained this creed, being far too proud of his precocious *savoir faire, et défaire !* not to award to it the full

* “My very dear brethren, and you, scum of the earth ! Christians over there !”

credit it deserved ; but his wise aunt, as an extenuation of all his vices, having set forth the plea of his youth, the world had echoed it ; and he himself, when any of his plots recoiled upon him, and entangled him in their mazes beyond the time he had contemplated their duration, began to solace his chafed spirit and impeded villany with the charming little *fantasma* of his unguarded youth ! having fallen a prey to the *fausses Agnès* with whom he had come in contact ! For, verily, were Dante living now, and creating his "Inferno," he must have deprived *his* HYPOCRITE of his "*leaden cloak*," so constantly was Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars gracefully draped in it, till, in fact, it had become part and parcel of himself. But, as he had steadily resisted all attempts on the part of his aunt to place him at a public school, the wonder is how he had acquired at so early an age so scientific, systematic, and practical a knowledge of all that was most vicious in vice, and most villanous in want of principle. It is true, that he had been at once the pride and the shame of his innumerable private tutors, whose name was legion ; for those gentlemen having consciences had soon resigned their post, saying, that nothing could possibly do them more credit than young Ferrars's intellectual advancement, or more *discredit* than the worse than undeveloped, the totally perverted state of his moral organization ; so that each, in quitting him, saw the same vision, and uttered the same prophecy for his future career. "Intellectually speaking," said they, "he will be a shining light ; but morally speaking, he will be a scourge, not to say a fatal curse to all with whom he may have any intimate association or relationship ; for he has neither feelings nor principles—he has only passions and vices." Through the many weeks and months snatched of idleness, during these incessant changes of preceptors, and the saturnalias that followed while left to his own devices, this father of the clever man—the clever boy—fought off going to Cambridge till he was two-and-twenty ; so that he arrived there less of a tyro than an *homme blasé* ; and for all this encouragement to his evil courses—like the boy in

the spelling-book, who at the foot of the gallows, bit off his foolishly-indulgent mother's ear, reproaching her as the cause of his being there—Mr. Ponsonby-Ferrars heartily despised his aunt; but, luckily for her, he as heartily respected and looked up to her money; and therefore devotion to her purse made him simulate ditto to her person. In short, he was quite a man of the present day, suited to the times, what the utilitarians call "a practical man," for he worshipped money, and money only, in all its sources, causes, and effects—the latter more particularly; taking especial care to *cotton* to our national claptraps, so that he studied the wealth of *show* quite as much as the show of wealth, which is our Sheffield pattern of the Golden Calf. And now as he sat darkly watching Edith, he kept casting up in his own mind a little sum of addition in *ifs* and *buts*, the total of which amounted to this:—That if he had not been so confoundedly hampered by A's, B's, and C's, he might have devoted himself exclusively to ensnaring Edith. True, he must have married her; there was nothing else for it, with a girl in her sphere of life; and true, also, she had no money; but then he considered the regality of her beauty, while youth lasted, quite a rank in life in itself, and almost equivalent in society, for a time, to wealth itself; and long before either she or it were old, he knew himself well enough to be convinced that he should be heartily tired of her, and glad enough to cast her off. And thanks to Slimeycraft, he was quite as well up in the infernal subtleties and crookednesses of the English laws about wives, as he was in all the *pure* moralities! of classic lore; and by settling a beggarly nominal sum on her to bar dower, at their marriage, he could, he knew, prevent her having any claim upon his future wealth. And then, the fact of her having no fortune, or no relations, but such a pompous ass as Samuel Panmuir, would be devilish lucky! as that would put her completely in his power; whereas, where there was money, the law foolishly allowed a woman certain claims; but he hoped a great mind like Lord Brougham's, who had done all he possibly could

to degrade women to the lowest ebb, and make the already too barbarously unjust laws against them even more stringent and oppressive—would soon sweep away,—which was what such a great Brougham ought to do!—every shadow of protection, or appeal for them! Ah! a few more such thorough-going fellows as Brougham are what are wanted in the legislature: having run the gauntlet of what the world calls profligacy so long, he knows how women ought to be dealt with. Then, again, Edith having no brothers is a *great* desideratum, for where there are brothers there are apt to be horsewhips, and the power of making things public, and all that sort of thing. She is devilish handsome to be sure! Don't flatter yourself, Miss Panmuir, I have not done with you yet. At all events, *that* fellow shall never supersede *me*! I promise you," said he, grinding his teeth fearfully at Mr. Lancaster, as he concluded this amiable mental soliloquy; a movement which did not escape Monsieur Charles de la Tour de Nêsle, who said—

"*Qu'avez vous, mon cher?*"

"Je n'ai rien *encore*!" laughed Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars; "for you know, my dear fellow, the new ministry is not yet formed."

"Ah! *j'y suis*," retorted the other; "which means, that when it is, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars will be *transformed* n'est-ce pas?"

"No, no, not exactly," rejoined that gentleman, borrowing one of Mr. Benaraby's oracular shrugs, as he leaned back in his chair, elongated his feet, and elevated his eyebrows; "for my plan about joining new administrations is modelled upon that of young ladies about accepting offers of marriage—I always wait till I am asked."

Now this was one of those two-coloured answers, like a shot-silk, which presented a different surface, according to the light it was viewed in: if Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars joined the new ministry, it would appear in the light of a modest disclaimer; and if he did *not*—why then the words would have merely meant

(a rare occurrence in his mouth !) the exact sense they were supposed to convey. After uttering this reply, not liking to continue the subject, he assumed a vacant, absent sort of look, as for a moment, removing his eyes from Edith, he lowered his opera-glass, and turned them upon Mrs. Moncton.

A quoi pensez vous, mon cher ? " asked the *Attaché*.

"I was merely studying anatomy en amateur," replied the other, glancing in an explanatory manner at the little woman's shoulders, as he turned with a broad smile to his interrogator.

"Ah!" laughed the latter, but still in the same under tone, "cela me rappelle toujours un délicieux *Marivaudage* de Théophile Gautier, dans son Roman de "Jean et Jeannette;" en parlant d'un des personnages, il dit. Sa poitrine intrépidement décolletée, était les plus délicieux néants, et l'on peut dire que jamais le *rien* ne fut plus joli."

"Ce pendant, mon cher, l'on peut aussi dire, qu'il y'a des choses plus jolies que le rien!" ha! ha'd Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars.

"*Certes!*" re-laughed the *Attaché*.

"You are very merry there. What *are* you laughing at?" asked Mrs. Moncton, sheltering her ringlets with one hand from a *tremontana* sigh that had just escaped from her fat Inamorado, as she turned to make this enquiry.

"Oh!" said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars—who perceived a move in the Duchess of Liddesdale's box, and therefore also rose to depart, holding out his hand to the lady—"De la Tour de Nèfle will tell you, for *he* is the owner of the jest."

"No, no," laughed the latter; "I disown it; not wishing, my dear Ferrars, to have any *bone* of contention between us, *comme vous dites vous autres Anglais*."

And with this, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars shut to the box door, and hurried on, so as to get through the crush-room, before Edith could arrive there; as his object was to gain the street and lean against a lamp-post, in order to let the light glare full upon his despairing face and figure as she got into the car-

riage. He had not long taken his station—dishevelled his hair, slouched his hat, and purposely disordered his *jabot*—ere the Duchess of Liddesdale's high-stepping bays dashed into the line, the sparks coruscating round their thorough-bred ankles, as the coachman pulled them up, against the curbstone.

Just as a link-boy was vociferating—

"The Duchess of Liddesdale's carriage stops the way;" and the functionary within answered—

"The Duchess of Liddesdale coming out!" Joe, the ostler of "The Tabard," who had been upon some business to Pantons Street, came limping down the Haymarket, accompanied by Union Jack, who was expressing his great wish that he had but money enough to buy a pair of highlows before he went to his new place.

"Well," said Joe, "s'pose as you axes some of the quality here; *there*, try that fine gent out yander, a leaning agin that 'ere lamp-post;" and he pointed moodily to Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars. The words were scarcely uttered before Jack had broken from him, and with his most piteous whine, rushed up to that gentleman, saying—

"Please, sir, *do* bestow a trifle on a poor boy, as aint got neither father nor mother, to help get him a pair of shoes; *do*, kind sir, if you please—you won't be never the poorer for it."

At this moment Edith was just coming out, leaning on Mr. Lancaster, and the policeman was about to push back Union Jack with his stave; but Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, stretching out his hand so that Edith must see it, and raising his voice so that she could not fail to recognise it, said—

"No, no, *pray* don't hurt the boy; here my poor fellow, here's a sovereign for you."

Edith had seen and heard the whole transaction as it had been intended she should do; and upon the strength of it, had bowed to him much more kindly than she otherwise would have done. Another personage had also seen, and heard, this little *scena*, which was Slimeycraft, as he issued from the pit-door;

for he was a great frequenter of the opera, not exactly from love of music; but, because like all low, vulgar-minded persons, he was exceedingly fond of knowing great people by sight, in order that he might stretch his own consequence an inch or two, by identifying them in steam-boats, at watering places, and on race-courses. So, scarcely had the door closed on Edith, and the carriage driven off, ere, coming up to his client and nudging his elbow familiarly, he said with his short, vulgar laugh—

"Giving a sovereign to a beggar! well, come!—that is a good *un*!"

"No, my dear Slimeycraft," said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, shaking his head with a joyous chuckle, "a *bad one*! or I should not have given it—ha! ha! ha! now do you understand?" and again the clever man laughed; for he never felt so clever as when he had *done* a fellow creature, or mocked their necessities, it was such a confounded proof of folly to want anything in this world, much less to want everything; and folly is a thing, for which of course cleverness can have no toleration.

"Oh! your humble servant," rejoined Slimeycraft, "I'm awake, but I really was alarmed at first, and thought you were forgetting, and fancying you were at Frothinton; not that we bought *souls* in that market after such an extravagant fashion,—no, no; we managed better than that by making the *gudgeons* pay for them—ha! ha! ha! snug's the word!"

"Well," said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars lowering his voice, "what about Australia? Do you think you shall be able to manage that?"

"Why the separating the children from the mother, makes it not only more difficult, but a *dooced* deal more expensive you see," responded Slimeycraft; "but," added he, "we had better talk it over to-morrow, either at my chamber, or at yours, for the street is no place for such discussions."

"No, only you see, my dear fellow," rejoined his client, laying his hand somewhat forcibly upon Slimeycraft's wrist, as they walked on towards the corner of the colonnade, where the

brougham of the former was awaiting him, "I *cannot* be hampered with those d—d children, now they are every day getting bigger, and the whole thing will be such a devil of a drawback upon my whole career, and my utter ruin, if my aunt should discover it, so that I am in a fever till they are off. My own opinion is that she will die on the voyage. Have you looked well over that d—d certificate? Are you quite sure that there is no flaw in it? Or none that can be made?"

"Impregnable as the rock of Gibraltar," flattered Slimey-craft, adding, "so much for the wisdom of employing country practitioners!"

"Well, well; there is no use in reproaching me now, or going back; unfortunately I did not know you then, and I was such a mere boy! And those d—d women always take advantage of one if they can,—I think I have done wonders, in keeping her quiet all these years, but a daudle of a wife is the very d—l, for even when they begin to die, they are so long about it, that one's patience gets quite exhausted."

"They say," rejoined Slimeycraft, passing his hands under the tails of his coat behind, and assuming a sort of jaunty step, equivalent to an equestrian rising in his stirrups, as he approached his own closer to his companion's face, "that all work may be expedited except lawyer's work, and you who know so much about the old German Alchymists, I wonder you don't know of that little narcotic for terminating obstacles, that they used to call powder of Paradise,—eh?"

"What the d—l do you mean, sir!" cried the other, retreating backwards two steps, as if an adder had literally stung him.

"Very well acted indeed! but still rather over done with *me*, who have had pretty well the engrossing of the whole skin, and know to a flourish, that there is not a white spot left on it," said Slimeycraft, first shrugging up his shoulders, and then arranging his collar.

"Pardon me, my dear Slimeycraft; but, I was thinking of something else."

"Of some *one* else I suppose; drinking delicious poison from her eyes, and all that sort of thing, eh! Well, every one to their taste, but I prefer delicious porter from an oyster house! So *owe reevair*; as the fine people say, though that *reevoir* mayn't think himself particularly ill-used, they generally *owe* every *one* else too."

And the clever attorney extended one stumpy finger to the clever man, as the latter got into his carriage, in the most patronizing and offensive manner, so that as he cried out "to the Albany," and drew up the window, he relieved himself by muttering, "d—d vulgar beast!"

He had been obliged to return home to repair the disorders of his dress, as well as those of his mind, which brought it to half-past two in the morning before Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars arrived at the Clarendon.

"Please sir," said the waiter, as soon as they had reached the dining-room door, "it is Mr. Benaraby's orders, that none of the gentlemen who sup with him are to be announced."

"Most Downing Street! most diplomatic! already," thought the new arrival, as the waiter silently flung open the door, leaving him to circumnavigate a large Indian screen, which having done, he came in sight of a well-spread horse-shoe table, surrounded by some half-dozen men beside the host, all of whom were strangers to him, with the exception of Cæsar Coakington, Blackiswhite, of the "Morning Puff," and young Malden, the millionaire, Lady Mabel Malden's step-son.

Coakington appeared quite to have cut his old familiar friend, the ribbon of his eyeglass, upon his sudden elevation to the Attorney Generalship; but indeed great men generally do consider as they get on in the world, that friends, like pasties, are only made to *be cut*; he now sat with intense ease, but at the same time with profound dignity, in a large velvet library chair, the dignity however predominating, as if he had already

been listening to, and minuting a state trial in the House of Lords; which did not prevent his evidently affecting young Malden, towards whom his manner was a happy mixture of the paternal, the protecting, and the "*I'm monstrously obliged to you.*" The young gentleman who was the object of this courteous mosaic, was still in deep mourning for his sire, some four months dead; the only thing not mourning about him was his face, which was ruddy, round, and cherubimical in the extreme, with an eruption upon each cheek of little hay-coloured stubble, which Benaraby assured him were whiskers looming in the future; but which appeared much more like so many capillary giggles—laughing at their own abortive attempts to grow; though five and twenty, he looked about eighteen, and was continually trying to shake his neck into a comfortable niche, within a very stiff white cravat, that was a something between a pillory and a five-barred gate; but more it is to be supposed like the latter, as he kept slapping his napkin, which he had got into a long wisp for the purpose, against the open palm of his left hand, as if he had been cracking a hunting whip, while, although he addressed his conversational gems chiefly to Coakington, he yet uttered them as loudly as if he had been haranguing a mob from a hustings. On his left, sat Blackiswhite of the "*Morning Puff*," silently sipping his wine, and looking, and listening with evident admiration to all the platitudes that fell from the richest commoner in England; and, moreover an embryo lord, while he (the beatified editor) kept flashing the dazzling facets of a huge diamond ring that he wore on his little finger, in all directions; of which flashings he might well be proud, as they were the *only* brilliant things that ever issued from his hands; further on, on Blackiswhite's right, sat a keen-eyed, swarthy-looking man, in the umbrageous shade of a very long nose, with very projecting eye-brows, and a complexion, which looked as if the darkness which had overspread the land of Egypt, upon being dispelled, had taken refuge in this gentleman's face; he was a Sir Benjamin Bullion, and next him

sat an old young man, of unexceptionable dress and address, a Lord Cyril Sinecure, who had graduated in Grosvenor Square, having for the last fifteen years alternated between foreign affairs in Downing Street, and foreign love affairs, in Paris and Vienna, till it became difficult to know which he was most attached to, the British Legation or foreign fascination, so nicely had he poised duty and devotion, between glove boxes and despatch boxes; but then, to be sure, diplomacy was a sort of heir-loom in his family, for his maternal grandfather, Lord Pendip, had been Ambassador at St. Petersburg, and was supposed to have shared the good graces of Catherine with Potemkin, at least the Dowager Lady Pendip's diamonds, some of the finest in England, were thought to have come from that imperial source; and as all diplomacy is *sensé* to be a sort of diamond-cut-diamond, it is lucky when it has *such* diamonds to cut! and yet not to be supposed that any diplomat would, or could, cut such diamonds merely for the sake of that vulgar jog-trot obsolete virtue called probity. The other two guests were minor stars from the Minories, apparently in the wake of Sir Benjamin Bullion, one a Mr. Moses Levi, almost as great upon 'Change as Sir Benjamin himself; the other a Mr. Eliphaz Leshen, not Eliphaz the Temanite, the second comforter of Job, who found it so difficult to refrain from speaking, nay, who asserted to his afflicted friend the impossibility of so doing, but a much fitter person for a *Job*, inasmuch as that he *never spoke*, but had a tongue as impregnable, and a mind as unbreakopenable as one of Mr. Hobbs's marvellous locks, and for this reason Mr. Benaraby had just inducted him into the office of his Private Secretary. Before the former, were divers long slips of paper, with an incalculable amount of figures upon each of them, thick as the hieroglyphics upon Cleopatra's needle; these he occasionally passed to Sir Benjamin Bullion, who, with a colossal gold pencil case, not unlike a model of the Duke of York's pillar, and therefore peculiarly adapted to the commemoration of chimerical thousands! occasionally drew a line across one whole row

of these figures, or here, or there, merely altered the solitary value of others, as he silently sipped his wine, knit his brows, and cleared his throat, without, however, (notwithstanding that oratorical preliminary,) taking the slightest part in the conversation. Upon the entrance of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, Benaraby rose, and with a sort of official circular look at the rest of the party, said, presenting him, and at the same time making room for him beside himself:—

“My friend, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars—and I hope I may add, *one of us.*”

To which the gentleman so apostrophized returned a condescending and patronizing smile, drawing up, however, haughtily, at the end of it, as he seated himself beside the host, so as not to be guilty of the greenery of accepting an anonymous position.

Thus presented to their notice, the new Attorney-General gave him a sort of Lord Burleigh nod, accompanied with a “how do, Ferrars?” Blackiswhite of the “Morning Puff,” who always took out his public homage in private familiarity, whenever an opportunity offered, merely kissed his little finger to him with the diamond ring upon it, “*assisted*” by the two next fingers to it, as he himself would have said, in giving an account in his *widely circulated columns*! of some fashionable young lady, *done* into matrimony by several Parsons. Lord Cyril’s smile and bow were at once bland, blank, and binocular, equally befitting the most intricate diplomacy, or the most stupid dinner party. Young Malden merely roared out:—

“That’s your sort! old fellow,” thereby meaning no doubt that the clever man was *crusty*, as to illustrate the proposition, he hurled a bit of the crust of a roll, beside him, at the new arrival.

“A very thorough bre(a)d way of greeting your friends, indeed, *my Lord*,” said Blackiswhite, anticipating the booby honours of the *millionnaire*, and then trying to look modest, as if he had really said a good thing. And so, in his own estima-

tion, he had; for had he not said *my Lord!* and like most English people of his class, he thought far more of the "host" of Lords, than he did of the Lord of Hosts.

Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars having returned Malden's fire with a petulance that nearly blinded that already not too clear-sighted individual, the Minorities next rose to him, but he not being much in *their* way, (except that, like them, he too was always upon '*Change!*') they almost instantaneously reseated themselves.

"What will you have, my dear fellow?" said Benaraby to his friend, when they were all reseated;—now, considering how *much*, or how *little*, this query might involve under existing circumstances, it was rather a cruel one. However, in order to blunt its allegorical edge, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars turned it upon the Amphytrion, while Blackiswhite made another attempt at a *calembourg en action*, by saying, as he pushed it over,—
"Here is a *dinde à la financier en surprise!*"

"Humph!—useless, because impossible—would dish the whole affair, and swamp you at starting," muttered Sir Benjamin Bullion, vigorously passing the heavy gold pencil through some item of the figures before him.

"No, no, I don't think so," *soto-voced* Benaraby, in a pertinaciously adhesive tone.

And then, passing a slip of paper to Ferrars, he said, "Here is our bill of fare; tell me what you think of it?" added he, pouring out a bumper of claret.

It was a list of the new Ministry. At the head appeared Lord Redby as Premier, Benaraby as Chancellor of the Exchequer; then followed the Home, Foreign, and Colonial Secretaries, Lords of the Admiralty, other walking gentlemen, and legal magnates, among whom Mr. Cæsar Coakington as "*Sir Cæsar Coakington*," figured as Attorney-General. But no post, or void for a post, did the clever man see assigned for himself. So that, although up to the present time he had always greatly admired Benaraby's impudence, he now only marvelled that it should have reached such a climax as to have publicly expressed

so audacious a hope as that he, Ferrars, would join his party, when there was evidently nothing wherewith to *unite* him to it!

"What do you think of it?" asked the former, with even more than his usual *sang froid*, as the other returned him the list.

"I see," replied Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, with one of his most measured, but at the same time his most compressed sneers, "that I have to congratulate *you* upon being Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Coakington upon being Attorney-General."

"Ah! here's one thing I had forgotten," said Benaraby, hastily scribbling on the back of the list of the new Cabinet these words—

"Wait till these people are gone, for I have much to say to you;" appending to them the following admonitory triplet:—

"Tu tamen effugito quæ tristia mentem
Solicitant, procul esse jube curasque metumque
Pallentem ultrices iras, sint omnia larta."

Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars took the hint, cleared his brow, poked all his darker passions into the background for the present, and giving his mind a sort of convivial shake, said with an air of the most charming *bonhomie*, as he walked into the *déjà à la financier-en surprise*—

"Well, my dear Coakington, I congratulate you, with all my heart. (?) But how did Lord Redby get over that little pendent fifteen thousand pounds about the Bouverie affair? It's a crying enormity in our laws that *men* should have to pay such sums for a little *délassement* of that sort; and I hope by the time you are Lord Chancellor, you will bring in a law that the whole and sole penalty should fall on the d—d woman."

"Come! my dear fellow, I must say that I think our laws are quite one-sided enough, and sufficiently against woman already. But *here* is the friend in need that was my friend in *deed*," concluded he, laying his hand upon young Malden's

shoulder ; " for he it was, who paid that fifteen thousand pounds stumbling block for me."

" All right !" cried that worthy, winking his right eye, and twitching his head into another corner of his stiff white pillory. " Nothing for nothing, you know, and I'm to have a peerage. My governor might have had it, which I should have liked better, as a peerage is about the only thing it is better to come in last for, than first. Only, poor fellow ! he was such a confounded democrat."

" Surely you mean aristocrat, my dear Malden," laughed Coakington, " for ' an aristocrat pays his debts, abhors a beggar, and makes a handsome provision for his son ! '—his charity having improved upon the proverb and ended where it began. Such at least is Junius's definition of the term."

" I know nothing about Junius," rejoined the future peer, with amiable candour, " except that he was the man who invented the Rockingham teapots (!) wasn't he ? but I'm sorry to say I know a deuced deal more about the Jews, than since the governor's death I find it agreeable to know ; but it's an ill wind that blows nobody good. So here's to you Ben, my boy, added he, nodding to Mr. Benaraby with another wink, as he brought his right hand down with terrific force upon the broad open surface of his champagne glass, so as to make the wine that remained in it effervesce. But Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars who feared that this exclusive compliment to the host, elegant and refined as it was, might yet be considered personal by the three gentlemen from the other side Jordan, now came to the rescue, in asking by what title this amiable specimen of " the wealth of nations " was to be raised to the peerage ?

" As Lord Assfleeceem," said he, with as much miniver dignity as if he had already donned his robes.

" Ha ! ha ! ha ! then decidedly," rejoined the clever man, " it can't be called a mere *unmeaning* title, for they have given you a *devise parlante* with it."

" Ah ! very likely, but I know nothing of heraldry, Lady

Mab's the woman for that. I wish you had heard her blowing up Adams, for putting an old maid's instead of a widow's lozenge on her carriage."

"Ha! ha! ha! I've heard of a jury of matrons; but it was a new idea of Adams's to empanel an old maid about a widow's carriage!" laughed Coakington.

And while this spiritual conversation was going on at the end of the table, Lord Cyril Sinecure was with great affability and affectation, talking a little Morning Puff, with Blackiswhite, and blending with an inimitable *savoir faire* which must have quite charmed that *elite* of editors, ministers, marriages, and Mehmet Ali, Brussels lace, new beauties, the Chinese revolution, and Cochin China fowls, dry toast, Dowagers, buttered eggs, the Bosphorus and Belgravia. They were now at the "article, beauty," of this charming colloquial encyclopaedia, discussing the reigning belles of the season. Blackiswhite, who, as in duty bound, knew the peerage and baronetage by heart, and who of course thought it necessary to know them also by sight, was a systematic opera-goer; and Lord Cyril was asking him if he had seen the new beauty, Miss Panmuir; whom he (Lord Cyril) considered decidedly *the* most charming, namely the most uniformly attractive person whom he had seen for years.

"That is," added he, "all her points are good, hands, feet, *tourneur*; gracefully turned head, perfect little pearls of ears, enchanting mouth and teeth, and that dreamy, drooping, oriental sort of double eyelid which makes the deep blue eye beneath look like a violet peeping through a drift of snow. And I myself think *detail*, that is points in man or woman, quite as essential as in a horse; for in all creations whether in art or nature, it is the little things that tell: for instance, in a picture it is the slight touches that stamp it as a work of genius; in music it is the gentle half tones that thrill through one; in adorning the person, or decorating a room, it is the little things, the undefinable nothings, that give to each their grace; and above all, in

manner, it is little things that attract or repel—in short, that cancel or enhance the value of all social intercourse.”

It is needless to say that Blackiswhite perfectly subscribed to these truths, and would have done so equally, had they come under the head of the fictions, he was in the habit of puffing. But he said he had not been fortunate enough to get a glimpse of Miss Panmuir, though he had heard she had been at the opera that evening; that one Blightyfluff, “a small-beer poet” and personal friend of his, had even described her dress to him, by saying that she had on a dahlia-coloured velvet cloak, lined with white satin, and trimmed with angels’ wings?”

“Ah!” said Lord Cyril, who was as proud of his technical knowledge of the component parts of women’s dress as a geologist might be of his *savoir* in different strata,—“Very poetical indeed! But I understand what he means, and think the simile excellent; for I have seen the mantelet in question; it is trimmed with grèbe, and the pure, silvery, luminous—yet downy, soft, look of those feathers, *do* convey to one the idea of an angel’s wing. When I was last at Geneva, I spent a whole fortnight at Clarens, shooting grèbes to get enough to trim a court train for my mother. They are the most difficult birds in the world to capture, as one is obliged to watch till they come down to the margin of the lake to feed.”

“Which would be shocking!” chimed in Benaraby, “if one could believe in metempsychosis, for only imagine Guildhall filled with a phalanx of keen sporting filial grèbes, marking down each unsuspecting alderman! as he revelled over his turtle and cold punch, in order to skin him, to give their mamma grèbes a trimming!

“Well turnabout is fair play,” laughed Coakington, “for no doubt their mammas often gave them one.”

“Aye,” chuckled Malden, “that’s the only good I can see in having a step maternal—they have no absolute right over one, and whatever they do or don’t do they are sure to be thought wrong.”

"Is it true," asked Blackiswhite of Lord Cyril, wishing professionally to gain as much information as possible in the "Marriage in High Life" line, "that this beautiful Miss Panmuir is to be married to a Mr. Lancaster? I should have thought with her beauty she might have aspired to something above a commoner!"

"Well! I don't know, Lancaster is a particularly gentlemanlike, agreeable fellow, and splendidly handsome!" said Lord Cyril, with a candour and cordiality that did him credit; "besides," added he, "he is well connected, a near relation I believe of the Duke of Liddesdale's."

"No relation at all! merely a toady or hanger on of the family," roundly asserted Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, without the slightest data for this statement; but deeming that in verbal, as in physical warfare, random shots often do mischief.

"Oh, indeed!" rejoined Lord Cyril. "I had understood he was a relation; but, however that may be, he's a devilish good-looking fellow."

"He's the only fellow I ever saw look decidedly well in a white choker," put in Malden.

Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars indulged in an unuttered regret that the article in question did not literally deserve the slang appellation which the future Lord Assfleece had bestowed on it.

"I hear," said Blackiswhite, helping himself to a glass of burgundy, and raising it to his lips as if to pledge himself to the fact, and at the same time to reiterate that other great fact, the diamond ring! "I hear that Miss Panmuir's smile is perfectly bewildering!"

"Not forgetting her voice," said Lord Cyril, "one feels it is with her, *quite* the

"Dulce ridentem lalagen amabo
Dulce loquentem—"

"Ah!" sneered the clever man,—

"Stultus quando videt quod pulchra puella ridet,
Tum fatuus credit se quod amare velit."

Lord Cyril, waiving the grossness of this unprovoked insult with most admirable command of temper, and perfect good breeding, justly considering that the man who could have permitted such licence to his temper, was too little of a gentleman to put him on a par with himself, by taking up the offence—said—

“As *I* never aspired to Miss Panmuir’s love, however egregious my folly may be (for he studiously avoided using the literal word of “however great a fool I may be”), “it could not go the length of construing her most sweet smile into love for me; my text being her

‘*Delectata illa risit tam blandum.*’

I merely meant that scrap of Horace as an illustration of the lovability of both her smile and her speech.”

“Ah, clearly so—clearly so,” said the new Attorney-General, passing three decanters that had been for some time stationary before him. “Lord Cyril, my dear Ferrars, was quite stating the case the *other* way; for it was *he*, who, like Faustus the shepherd, was exclaiming—

“‘*Me aspiciens motis blande subrisit oculus.*’”

Benaraby touched the clever man under the table with his foot, and frowned and bit his lip, as much as to say, “For goodness’ sake *don’t* injure our party before you have joined it, by getting up a sort of schoolboy quarrel about nothing.”

“I assure you, my dear Lord Cyril,” said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, rallying so as to satisfy the host, and with what he meant to be a bland smile, “you quite mistook me, if you thought for one moment that I could have uttered such a quotation in reference to you. I was thinking of that conceited prig of a Lancaster, who evidently, upon the strength of her sweet smile, thinks that that silly girl is in love with him.”

“She might prove her silliness more indisputably,” rejoined

Lord Cyril, bowing coldly, at the same time looking at his watch, when, announcing that it was half-past three, he rose to depart; a move that was soon followed by all the others, with the exception of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, Sir Benjamin Bullion having a little mysterious conversation at parting behind the screen with the host. After the fashion of the Egyptian priests, the two *friends* at length found themselves together, and drawing up their forces, namely, themselves, in two easy-chairs, each placed himself opposite the other.

"Well; my dear Ferrars!" was the first shot fired by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

"Well; my dear Benaraby!" responded the clever man, without wasting any more ammunition.

"That's a neat waistcoat of yours," said the host, which might be considered in the light of the French army taking off their hats to the English troops at the battle of Fontenoy, previous to commencing hostilities, politely saying, "*Après vous, messieurs?*"

"And that an invaluable coat of yours, my dear Benaraby," retorted the other, with a laugh that was anything but musical; "for I never saw one before that bore *turning* so well. Egad! if I were not afraid of hurting Nugee's feelings, I'd employ '*Moses and Son*' myself."

"*They knew you would*, and therefore deputed me to *measure* you," replied his companion, with his usual imperturbable *sang froid*, caressing his chin with the fore-finger and thumb of his left hand as he spoke.

"Oh, indeed! Well, I'm rather *wide* across the *chest*," rejoined the clever man, throwing back his shoulders, "which, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, I think it is right you should know."

"Ha! ha! ha!"

"Ha! ha! ha!"

And the two *friends* laughed for some seconds genuinely and heartily. Having by this last pass *unmesmerised* themselves, they began to speak and act in their natural characters.

"Come;" said Benaraby, advancing his chair a few inches nearer to that of his *vis-à-vis*, "when one takes office one must attend to business; and I now repeat to *you*, in *earnest*, the question you asked *me*, in *jest*, some months ago, when one morning, at your rooms in the Albany, you said to me, 'What do you want?'"

"Earnest for earnest, what have you got to give?"

"Humph!—to be candid with you,

'Tres mihi convivæ prope dissentire videntur,
Poscentes vario multum diversa palato, &c.'

"And our idea was—as we cannot, at our first onset, make the limited number of posts a minister has to bestow multiplex, in order to accommodate the innumerable aspirants for each,—I repeat, our idea was, to get our *great guns*, like yourself, to join us, without *at first* bestowing on them any *ostensible office*; which would varnish over their succession as *conscientious* and *disinterested* in the eyes of that very respectable, but not very clear-sighted, old lady, the public. Now comes the *per-contrà* side of the account: to a fellow who, like yourself, has so many different irons always in the fire—as, indeed, all clever men have—there is, I need not tell you, a sort of all-powerful, though *occult*, or rather, I should say, *because* occult, influence with a ministry—a sort of getting one's ends accomplished in all directions; in short, what is vulgarly called getting one's wicked will of people, which is worth all the nominal and palpable offices in the world, more especially to a man of your calibre. Don't you perceive, my dear Ferrars?"

"Oh, yes, I perceive clearly," rejoined he, with one of his bitter smiles, "that selling oneself for a mouthful of ministerial *promises* is much like having the office of register of the Star Chamber, which his relations, the Cecils, bestowed on Sir Francis Bacon, but upon the income of which he did not enter till twenty years after, which caused him truly to say, that '*it was like another man's ground buttalling upon his house, which*

might mend his prospect, but did not fill his barn.' And you, as a Protectionist, ought to know, my dear Benaraby, that every man wants his barn *filled* with something besides—CHAFF."

"Oh, very well, my dear Ferrars, *just* as you please," retorted his *friend*, with a sort of 'I-wash-my-hands-of-you shrug;' "why not, while you are about it, take *another* rasher off that *Bacon*, if anything *rasher* can be? Perhaps you had better at once write to the Queen, warning her against Lord Redby, as Bacon did to James about Lord Coke, and in the selfsame words: they would make *rather* a sensation in the nineteenth century. Let me see—how did the expostulation run? Oh! ah! 'Now I beseech your Majesty, let me put you the present case truly. If you take my Lord Coke (Redby), this will follow: first, your Majesty shall put an over-ruling nature in an over-ruling place, which may breed an extreme; next you shall blunt his industry in matters of finance, which seemeth to aim at another place; and, lastly, popular men are no sure mounters for your Majesty's saddle. If you make my Lord Hobart (the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas), you shall have a judge at the upper end of your council board, and another at the lower end, whereby your Majesty will find your prerogative pent; for, though there should be emulation between them, yet, as Legisto, they will agree in magnifying that wherein they are best. For myself, I can only present your Majesty with *gloria in obsequio*.' Now, you know your own affairs best, my dear fellow; but if you would take my advice (which, nevertheless, I don't presume to force upon you), from this sapient model you would select and stick to the *gloria in obsequio*, and leave all the rest."

Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars began to think so too, and taking council of his right ear, which he pulled vigorously, he said—

"But the devil of it is, you see, my dear fellow, *that* pamphlet of mine on Free-trade, so smashing to the Protectionists, which I wrote only last year."

"Pooh!" shrugged Benaraby, "write another *for* the agricultural interest, and take for your epigraph—

“ ‘Cum relego scripsisse pudet quia plurima cerno
Me quoque quæ fuerant iudice digna lini.’ ”

“ Ah, but public opinion ! ”

“ Public fiddlestick !—

“ ‘ A thing of wood and wires, by *others* played.’ ”

And the deuce is in it, backed by the ministry, and with *nearly* the whole of the press at our command, if we cannot play upon that one-stringed instrument.”

“ Ah ! if it *were* but a one-stringed instrument ; but I fear, on the contrary, it is more like an *Æolian* harp, giving forth many echoes to each passing breath.”

“ Then all the easier for me, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, to raise the wind *we choose* it to respond to. I tell you what, Ferrars,—and you know it better than any man, without my telling it to you,—England is the most glorious ! arena in the world for public men ; because the *private man*, and the public *character* are so completely separated—a man’s moral and his official identity not being linked together with even as small a segment of humanity as the Siamese twins ; and the national cant about private character being sacred !—enables every man with brains in his head to lock up that dead letter, which some slow coaches call principle, in his strong box, and put his wits out at the best interest. A great nation England, certainly ! but then all their real wisdom comes from the East ; and so they’ll be forced to acknowledge in time. For instance : in China, when a mandarin wishes to commit suicide he rolls up a large bolus of gold-leaf and swallows it ; no sooner arrived at its destination than the gold-leaf unrolls itself, and adheres to the coats of his stomach, like paper on a wall ; whereupon all the natural functions are suspended, and annihilation ensues ; and in like manner, when in England we want to destroy a man’s conscience, we also administer a golden pill ; which gild-ing the conscience hermetically, equally destroys its functions,

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and frees its owner from all human trammels. Now I need not tell one of your acumen, that to be in a position to have one's *interest variously* and universally solicited, and to have this current *interest* represented by the solid capital of INFLUENCE, with a ministry, is better than gold,—‘yea, than much fine gold; and sweeter than honey, in the honeycomb!’ Being Sunday morning, you may consider *that* as my text if you like, which for novelty's sake I have put at the end, instead of at the beginning, of my homily.”

“There is a vast deal of truth in what you say, my dear Benaraby, only the stumbling block to me still is—”

“Bah! my dear fellow,” broke in the other, “there always has been, always are, and always will be, stumbling blocks in and about everything terrestrial and celestial; for, as Sir Thomas Browne somewhere or other in his *Religio-Medici*, or his *Hydriotaphia*, I forget which, speaking of the anomalies of creation, says: ‘There is another secret not contained in the Scripture, which is more hard to comprehend, and put the honest father, St. Augustine to the refuge of a miracle, and that is, not only how the distant pieces of the world and divided islands should be first planted by men, but inhabited by bears, tigers, birds of prey, and noxious animals, beforehand.’ Now you need not soar into the altitude of miracles on account of *your* stumbling block (which I presume to be your former publicly expressed political opinions), for they need only put you to the refuge of a sudden change, which in state affairs is always called *conviction*, and in those of the church, *conversion*. Then, with regard to your insular anomalies: your former *erroneous* opinions were of course the wild beasts, birds of prey, and noxious animals, while your present ones are *ibid* the rich growth of progress, implanted by human wisdom. In short, you must write another pamphlet, or better still, an imposing ‘great, big book!’ in four volumes; suppose you call it the “NEW ENOCHIASTES,”* for our pet baboon, the public, ever likes a hard

* Image Breaker.

nut to crack; and—bless its innocent soul!—it will never know that you have stolen Milton's title in this great standard work. You must knock down, right and left, all your former idols, beginning with yourself, as far as being the vehicle of those now, in your estimation, heretical opinions; then lay it on thick about our national virtues! purely English feelings! our proud position among nations as the grave of Despotism! and the cradle of Liberty! with regard to any of our little drawbacks, *pose naught*, and carry one on to our immaculate virtues! roundly asserting, that from the time of Britain's first Saxon dawn, every Englishman has been incorruptibly virtuous! and every Englishwoman ditto! and that, however civil, religious, and social abuses may have disfigured, disgraced, and deteriorated *other states*, *none!* have ever yet crept into England's immortal constitution. After this, introduce a grandiloquent appeal to the whole world, civilized and uncivilized, and ask it if it has not heard—

‘That England *alone* was the elime
Where the blue flag of hope is unfurled,
And floats o’er the breezes of Time;
Where Justice and Liberty blend,
And fools make a watchword of neither.’

But at the same time, take care *not* to add the poet's original conclusion—

‘You're as wise as most others, my friend,
For I never heard of it either!’

You may then nearly paraphrase that splendid article of Macaulay's upon Milton, in the ‘Edinburgh.’ Few will denounce and fewer detect, the plagiarist, when in a fine peroration you tell them that the *late* Ministry only thought of *ruling*, but not of *righting*, the people; that *your* aim is to reverse the rod, to spell the charm backward, to break the fetters which bound a hoodwinked people to the Juggernaut car of a corrupt govern-

ment. Such is, and ever was your only aim. And such it ever will be, though an error in judgment, occasioned by a too hot zeal! and the force of circumstances, caused you at one time to evince those principles, and fight for the great and glorious cause of human progress under another banner;—for that universal cause, and for that *only*, you had joined the Free-traders, and for that same great cause you *now* left them, regardless of any personal odium that might attach to yourself; convinced, as you *now* were, that that party would never forward this mighty end. For remember, my dear fellow, the more exclusively devoted a man is to his own personal interest, or the more he indulges in any particular routine of vice,—the more studiously must he affect immolation for the public weal, and the more loudly laud the purely opposite moral code to his own career. After this, sum up, by stating that the English are the most anti-mammon-worshipping, practically-Christian, highly-bred, utterly-unselfish, and blandly-mannered people on the face of the earth. You need not stay to prove it, for *this* is a little account they will never dispute! And after that, you may go to sleep, for the game is in your own hands.”

Mr. Benaraby ceased, not from want of words, but from want of breath. And his companion looked at him with a gradually expanding admiration!—for to him, a fine development of unprincipled craft and two-edged cunning had the same charm that a fine anatomical development would have for a medical student; or a symmetrical one, for a sculptor.

“But you see, my dear Benaraby,” said he, still hanging back, *pour se faire valoir*, “one looks such a devil of a fool in the eyes of the *world*, to sell oneself for nothing,—whereas *office* at once accounts, and atones, for any amount of political apostasy.”

“*Nothing!*” reiterated the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, interrupting him: “and do you call it nothing! to unsuspectedly pull the strings of a whole cabinet of ministerial *Marionnetes*?—to see your name figure at all their dinners, at

once conspicuously and ornamentally, like an acanthus on a capital!—nothing! to wrest—mothy honours of skeleton supplementary initials to your name from mouldy universities! in the wake of the Premier;—thus becoming to him, what the tail is to the comet, its most brilliant, because its most stare-at-able part!—and, above all, do you call it *nothing*! to escape the political annihilation of even being *six months* among the outs—unpuffed! unattacked! unparagraphed! untalked of! unthought of, uneyoked, perchance, by a solitary reminiscence—plunged, in fact, into a moral Lethe, which it takes at least a ten years' tide of future prosperity and popularity to resuscitate a man from! And as to your *not* having office, *that* is the very pedestal upon which you are to be placed, in the highest niche of supposititious *integrity*; and, depend upon it, you make a grand mistake in giving the mass credit for such chemical attributes, as to imagine that *they* ever analyse or test any thing; *results* are all they look to; *get on* in the world, and no particle of the said world ever thinks of asking *how* you have got on. *Arrive* at an eminence of any sort, good, bad, or indifferent, and no one cares to enquire whether you have travelled by the broad, legitimate high road,—or by the dirtiest back lanes. Another fallacy is, that men who are mixed up with each succeeding government *must* of necessity be so clever as to render their services indispensable to *legislation*, whoever the *legislator* may be; and, cleverness, in the present day, is in the mundane, what faith is in the Calvinistic creed, not only a *sine qua non*, but an atonement for the worst actions! So, have the goodness to decide, my dear fellow, because I promised Blackiswhite to send him a *completed* list of our forces, that he may announce it officially in Monday's "Morning Puff."

This time the clever man pulled his under lip, and for some seconds remained in council with himself; at length he spoke, saying—

"Well, my dear Benaraby, I believe you are right: only may I consider that at some future period, say a year or two

hence, that the Redby Ministry stand pledged to give me one of those "*palpable, tangible*" offices, of which you affect to think so lightly,—with, *above all*, a tangible salary attached to it?"

"Clearly, my dear Ferrars, clearly,—as Coakington would say," rejoined his *friend*, filling out another glass of claret for himself, as he added—crossing his legs, and holding the wine up to the light, as he closed his right eye—"In two years, it is by no means out of the cards, that *I* may be Premier myself, and *then*, again to quote your words at the Albany that morning, when

‘Coming events cast their shadows before,’—

command anything in my power to bestow! A poor, thin, potation claret, after all. I wish to heaven I had Pitt's capacity for *port-(e)*! it would be invaluable in the present state of Turkish affairs."

"Ah! my dear fellow," said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, rising and putting on his hat, "you *do* combine as many opposite extremes as most men, so rest satisfied with being a *Fox*! which I think will answer your purpose much better. And now, I'm going, so good night; but *mind*, you make out to Blackiswhite, that I *resolutely* (mind, that is the word and no other)—that I resolutely refused to take office, lest the motives of my secession might be impugned; for *this* version of my change *must* be in print with the announcement of it."

"And so you did!" rejoined Benaraby, making a note of this *fact* (!) with a pencil on the back of a letter; "for no man was ever known to accept—what he could not get!"

"Ha! ha! ha!"

"Ha! ha! ha!"

And with this final laugh, the *friends* shook hands and parted; Mr. Benaraby sitting up to write two or three notes,

which, as they were not to be sent till Monday, he took infinite pleasure in dating from "DOWNING STREET;" and the clever man, as he drove back to Albany, resigning himself as best he could, to the fulfilment of his political mission, which was, to
BE MADE USE OF BY ALL PARTIES, AND TRUSTED BY NONE!

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION XIII.

"God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."—*Eccles. vii. 29.*

"Who bears no trace of passions' evil force?
Who shuns thy sting, O terrible remorse?
Who would not cast
Half of this future from him, but to win
Wakeless oblivion for the wrong and sin
Of the sealed past?"

J. G. Whittier.

ON the Tuesday morning after Mr. Benaraby's supper at the Clarendon—to his "trusty and well-beloved friends and counsellors"—the carriages were rolling about London at an earlier hour than usual, as is generally the case on the advent of a new Cabinet.

"Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, M. P., had had an interview with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, at his official residence in Downing Street," as the following Wednesday's Morning Puff duly announced; for the information of the great and little vulgar. It did not, however, record how heartily they had laughed over some of their future schemes, which were never exactly brought before the Privy Council, or how many devilled kidneys and glasses of champagne they had discussed with their respective plans. As for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the right honourable gentleman's ebon ringlets were to the full as luminous (if not rather more so) than his new budget; and no wonder, for had they not just been "anointed with the oil of

gladness above their fellows?"—and although before the first week had closed upon his new-blown honours, there appeared the following cutting announcement in an opposition paper (no doubt inserted by some insidious bigot of the Irish Brigade):

"The Chancellor of the Exchequer begs to acknowledge the receipt of *thirty pieces of silver*."

The right honourable gentleman neither "went out," at least not just then—nor hung himself—from, of course, sharing in common with more ordinary mortals, the dislike to being kept in suspense.

As for the clever man, he literally appeared to have a sort of universal new nap; which, indeed, is for the most part, the miraculous result to all seedy things that pass through the hands of the Israelites; though it is generally *vice versa* with regard to persons; therefore, it is to be presumed, that he had been especially favoured; and this renovating principle seemed to have extended itself, even to all his appendages. The very varnish on the panels of his cabriolet, seemed to have attained a higher polish; the harness, *ibid*. Even Esmeralda, the thorough-bred chesnut mare, appeared to step higher than usual, and to prick up her ears, and toss with dilated nostrils her small, finely turned head, in order to sniff the diplomatic air, as she was driven up and down that solemn, silent, secretarian street. While Tim—had his master been Premier, or even had he himself jockeyed fate into arriving at that winning-post—could not have lolled back in the cab with a more Sybarite Sardanapalus air, or nodded to his peers as he occasionally passed them, after a more King Cambyzes fashion. At length pulling up in a parallel position with Mr. Benaraby's brougham, and addressing the brown man on the box of that brown vehicle, he said—assuming a pleasant off-hand parliamentary tone of persiflage—

"Vell, Mr. Jenkins, I never thought as you an' I, should be a sittin hon the same side."

"Lawr! Pollytics is all chance, like racing, you never can

tell for sartin aforehand, who'll win, or who'll bolt," replied Mr. Jenkins, sententiously—passing the back of the white doeskin glove on his right hand under his nose, in a way that it certainly never could have anticipated, and which fully bore out his doctrine of chances.

"Har," said Tim, meditatively, passing the back of *his* right hand also under his nose, and winking his corresponding optic, "I spose has *your gent* 'ill make a good thing hon it, letting hof the Minories know hin time which vay has the *fun*s will see-saw?"

"Haint you then aware," responded the official Jehu, shaking his head with solemn deprecation, "has the *cabnet* ministers takes a *hoath* never to *reweal* nothink?"

"Lawr! bless your wirgin hinnocence!" subjoined the clever man's groom, "WHAT'S A HOATH TO BENHARABY?" and he accompanied the query by a noise very like the decanting of a bottle of wine, achieved by the sudden gymnastics of his tongue against the roof of his mouth; then adding, "But you said jist now as pollytics was all chance, and little matter too," and Tim winked his right eye, and touching with the extreme lash of the whip, the tip of Esmeralda's off ear, continued—"Very little hodds indeed, so long has one keeps the whip, hand hany petickler liveries attached to the Chancellor of the Hexchequer! Hor does he still mean to *do you brown*—hey?"

"Noo state liveries for court of course, but hother days same as usual."

"Pray, can you tell me—for all this here sort of tackle is new to me, as *we've* never been in hoffice afore,—is the wages riz?—I mean of we servants—ven they takes hoffice; cause I can't see no use in deserting of one's party, and all that 'ere sort of thing, hif they haint."

"Lawr bless you, no! the higher they gets, the more they bruises the hoats! hand squeezes the most hout of hevery one. I read in the noospaper the other day something about a wessel as was buildin for the Queen, vere it said as Her Majesty hall-

ways vent hon the screw principle; so, in course the quality thinks it necessary to do the same."

"Ha! then it's lucky, as there's a screw loose among so many on em! but of one thing, I'll take *my* Davey."

What the intersting fact was that he was about to vouch for, did not however transpire, as his master at that moment appeared on the threshold; so that, like many greater men, just as he was about to make sure of anything, he was turned out of his place.

Upon assuming the reins—not, alas! of government, but of his horse—Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars determined to strike while the iron was hot, and drive to Upper Brook Street, to his aunt Lady Mammonton's, as he was much in want of a couple of hundred pounds; and as that Lady was a great Conservative, and a vast admirer of Lord Redby's, her nephew resolved upon attributing his recent rat, to having originated entirely from a deference to her superior judgment; and a wish for the future to adapt his political views to hers: and although he had gained nothing from the Protectionists by the change, and might lose much in public opinion; yet having *her* approval, and that of his conscience (?) *he* wanted nothing else. Such was the "abstract and brief chronicle" of his plan of attack for that morning; but having business with a publisher in Great Marlborough Street, he decided upon calling upon the latter first.

Upon arriving there, a few doors beyond the publishers, at the police-office, he saw an immense crowd; and presently making her way through this crowd, a small female figure, muffled in a thick black veil, which, just then, to avoid suffocation, she raised, and apparently began asking some of the people to let her pass—could it be!—

"No,—yes,—it is—Fraulein Gothe Kant. What the d—l can *she* be doing here?" thought the clever man—it was this very evening she was to go to Mrs. Moncton's; at all events, she was the very last person he cared to meet. So, cutting across into the opposite street, he pulled up and got out, telling Tim to

wait there with the cab, and slouching his hat over his eyes, and holding his handkerchief before his mouth, he kept watching Adelaida, who for a second was again hidden by the crowd. "Perhaps," said he, "after all, it may not be her, but only her *Doppelgänger**—no; it was herself, in flesh and blood—at least in as much flesh and blood as she ever possessed; of this he became certain, as she finally emerged from the crowd, and with a hurried step walked on till she reached the publishers, whither she entered.

"What the h—ll! can *she* be doing there? Surely she never can be thinking of publishing on her own account? But if she is, I'll soon put a stop to that," soliloquized the clever man, who, large as the world is, never could be convinced that there was sufficient room in it for any one besides himself. But as he was determined to find out what her errand there was, and could not stay in the street during the time that must elapse before her departure—being too well aware of the *carte du pays* among the magnates of the publishing world, not to know that a little ugly woman, going on foot, and dressed in shabby black, with an unpronounceable foreign name, would be detained at least three quarters of an hour, before she succeeded in obtaining an audience—he resolved upon the *mezzo-terme* of turning into the police-office.

"For who knows?" concluded he,—"*one* may generally pick up a chapter for a book in those sort of places." And he was right; for the chapters of that wonderfully varied and curiously-dovetailed mosaic human life, are not merely the best, but the only good ones for a book which assumes to represent it.

The court was densely crowded with the belongings and associates of one or two prisoners within, and a worshipful sprink-

* The Germans have a superstition that some persons keep a shadow of themselves, which they call a *Doppelgänger*. For fuller particulars on this subject, see Mrs. Crowe's charming work, "The Night Side of Nature."

ling of the swell-mob without. Two night cases had just been dismissed—one, that of a woman who had broken a large pane of plate-glass purposely in a shop window, and who, upon hearing her sentence of one month's imprisonment at Coldbath Fields, said to the Magistrate—

"Thank your worship—there's bread and shelter for *one* month at all events."

The other was that of "a gent," for having been "drunk and disorderly," to the extent of eclipsing a policeman's eye, and insulting "*a female*," but he paid his five shillings like a man !" and departed to go and do likewise, on the first convenient opportunity.

The next case was that of "a small boy," at the suit of a shoemaker, in Oxford Street, for having attempted on the previous evening to pass base coin, by palming off upon him a bad sovereign, in payment of a pair of boots, value eight shillings.

"Please your vorship," said Mr. Rogers the shoemaker, "I was stannin at my shop-door, betwixt six and seven yesterday evinin, when this here chap accompanied by that ere lame feller, comes in as bold as brass, and says, says he, 'I wants a pair of high-lows, the strongest and bes you've got.' I aint got none, says I, but what *is* the best, for I makes em all myself, and don't never buy none of your ready-made, wholesale rubbish. With that they valks in, and the little un tries on a matter of ten or twelve pair of highlows, afore he could suit his self. At length, when he had got a pair to his mind, he pulls out this here bad sovereign, please yer vorship, and hands it over to me in payment of the boots; vith that, I rings it on the counter, and of course I see directly it was a bad un. 'How's this, my man,' says I, very civil and quiet-like; for I still thought p'raps as one or tother on 'em might have other money about 'em as warnt bad to pay for the boots. 'How's this,' says I, 'here's a bad sovereign, and if you knows who give it you, I advise you to give it em back, and if you don't, to chuck it into the fire, or else it may be gettin on you into trouble.' Upon this, the little chap

says nothink, but turns and looks up in the lame man's face; who, takin the sovereign out of my hand, and lookin at it on both sides, says as cool as a kewcumber, 'Bad, is it? Well, that aint surprisin, for no one ever knowd any good to come from where that come from.' 'Mayhap, then,' says I, 'you knows some gang of coiners?' 'No, I don't,' says he, 'but I knows summut worse nor they; and then, please your vorship, he tells me a cock-and-bull story about a gent at the Hopra ouse door, last Saturday, a givin on this here sovereign in charity to that 'ere chap—a likely thing truly! So arter that, findin as neither on 'em could pay me, I was herritated at 'avin 'ad my time taken hup for nothink in this way, so I just called a *pleese*-man, and give the little chap in charge."

Mr. Rogers having ceased, the magistrate asked the boy what he had to say in his defence; but poor Union Jack was sobbing so violently that not one word could he utter.

"Please yer vorshup," said Joe Roberts, advancing a step or two, and pulling the forelock of his hair, as he bowed to the magistrate, at the same time kicking back his right foot, and pointing to Rogers with his left thumb over his left shoulder—"Please your vorshup, vot this good man says is quite true—aint got nothink to say agin it; but vot I says is true *halso*, and hof it I be quite ready to take my hoath; and my character will bear inwestation, as your vorshup can find hout by ax-ing about me (Joe Roberts my name is) at the Tabard, at Southwark, where, as man and boy, I've been hostler for the last fifteen year. And it vos last Saturday night, that Jack and I was comin from Pantan Street down the Haymarket, ven the quality was a comin hout of the Hoprer 'ouse; and Jack says to me, says he, 'I vish as I had a pair of new boots to go to my new sitivation vith—' for, please yer vorship, he'd ad the luck to get a sitivation that wery mornin. 'Vell, Jack,' says I, a pin-tin to a pale, lean gemmen as was a stannin like a monnymet hunder a lamp, you sees that ere gent,' says I, 'vith a face summut the colour of a Bath-cheese, and a purplish sort of large

turnip-radish like in the middle on it, hooked downwards for a nose. Vell, spose as you goes and axes him to give you summut towards gettin on you a pair of boots. Vell, avay starts Jack, like the 'lectric tellygraft; and to his surprise, but a deal more to mine! (till I found as it was a bad un), this here fine gemmen give him a sovereign. And now," concluded Joe, tightly folding his arms, and knitting his heavy brows into a dark frown, till the expression of his face became something between that of a Scylla, and a savage, "if so be as yer vurshup vishes to know vy I directed Jack to go and ax that particklar gent for money to buy shoes; it was that I thought as a solitary pair of shoes, vas the least a FATHER could give his SON! for that fine gemman, great a man as he may be, is nevertheless 'this here poor, ragged, beggar-boy's father. It is now eleven year ago since he first ruined his mother, and then left her to die of want in the union—and that fine gemman's name is Mr. Henry P——."

Here Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, by a painful and extreme effort, kept in his breath, as he slouched his hat still more over his eyes, and held his handkerchief quite over the rest of his face, eclipsing himself still more among the crowd. While "the worthy magistrate," to quote the words of the Morning Puff in its next day's report of the case, "*very properly*" here interfered, saying,—“Hold, my good man, I cannot allow any gentleman, holding a position in society, to have his character aspersed through the posthumous slanders of an abandoned woman.” *

“Abandoned woman!” thundered Joe, clenching his fist, and shaking it impotently, yet gigantically, not so much even at the utterer of this opprobrious epithet individually, as at the whole world collectively, whom he felt he should like to have felled with one blow, and trampled on afterwards. “Abandoned woman! yes, abandoned by that villain! who is ten times more abandoned nor ever she was. But only wait till he gets

* Fact.

where he sent her afore her time, poor creetur! and then mayhap he'll see which is the most abandoned of the two."

But poor Joe was again silenced—"the worthy magistrate" being apparently of that clerical gentleman's opinion, who thought that the truth ought not to be spoken at all times; and of course, in a court of justice (?) it is particularly out of place!

The magistrate said he was very sorry, as the boy was so young and did not appear to be otherwise vicious; but that, as neither he, nor Joe had attempted to deny the charge of his passing a bad sovereign, and there was no counter-evidence to prove that he was really *not* aware that it was such, he had nothing for it but to commit the boy for one month's hard labour at the treadmill.

"Oh! sir, sir! for Heaven's sake!—for mercy's sake!—don't send me to prison. I am innocent; indeed, indeed, I am," sobbed poor Union Jack, in an agony of grief and despair, falling upon his knees before the magistrate; "I belong to nobody; I have no one in the world but poor Joe and Boxer; I have neither mother nor father——" And here the boy's utterance was literally choked. But he was mistaken in his latter assertion, for his father, unperceived, was at that moment contemplating him, and minutely scrutinizing every feature and expression of his face, not so much *en amateur* as *en connoisseur*, for he was artistically and scientifically studying every quiver of agony in that young despair! and microscopically watching the dark progress of the blight that was stealing over that human blossom of which *he* was the parent stem.

No wonder, then, that "that dear Ferrars'" description was so graphic! and intense. What a pity that the misses and matrons who constituted his admirers, could not be there to see the Spartan school in which he pursued his studies, and mastered his art; and if they had, what then? Mr. Thackeray makes Mr. Yellowplush utter the following truth:—"If Satan himself were a lord, I do believe there's many virtuous English mothers would be glad to have him for a son-in-law." And he

might have added—or had he the prospect of money, or was known as a *personnage* in the world, they would be equally eager for the honour of the alliance under a similar identity. But Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had a double chance of success in English society; for, to quote again from Mr. Thackeray * and the Yellowplush correspondence, which I have no doubt now that gentleman would rather people would *not do*, seeing that in that abstruse game of speculation, called life, the shuffling and cutting of the cards have caused him to “wear his rue with a difference;” which, however, as we were about to observe, did not prevent Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars from carrying out, in his intercourse with the world, another of Mr. Yellowplush’s most sagacious and incontrovertible axioms—I allude to that one, wherein he makes the following remark:—

“I’ve always found through life, that if you wish to be respected by English people, you must be insolent to them.” •

Thoroughly imbued with this truth, the clever man had found its practical adaptation to his daily use work like a charm in pioneering all before him; so that, had he been detected in the act of picking a pocket or any other species of blackguardism, he would have vapoured amain so sonorously and loftily about HIS HONOUR! being called in question, that not only would he have set the whole of the metropolitan police force to flight by the din, but have proceeded on his way free and unfettered, in a sort of impromptu triumph! amid the brazen flourishes of his own trumpets.

Finding that all his appeals were in vain, upon the police-

* The Author hopes Mr. Thackeray will pardon the liberty he has taken with his name; but he has done so, from the fact of his (Mr. Thackeray) being *indisputably* the *first* of English living novelists, of which he must, by this, be himself pleasingly aware; for Juvenal has anticipated our times—and how truly—

“—didicit jam dives avarus disertos,
Tantum admirari, tantum laudare
Ut pueri Junonis avem!——”

man approaching and laying his hand on his shoulder to conduct him to the prison-van that was at the door, poor Union Jack sank down on the floor, and clung to it convulsively with his nails, as if in it was his last hope. Is it not the last hope of all wretches who have no other to turn to—their mother earth! and even she is a stepmother to some, keeping her sheltering graves for her favourites.

"Come, come, Jack," said Joe Roberts, wiping the big tears from his eyes brusquely with the back of his sleeve, "be a man; your father's son ain't no call to be ashamed, whatever that son's father have. It's a b—d! shame, I know; but then it wouldn't be all on a piece if it warn't. Up, my boy, never give him that satisfaction; that's what he wants is to make you eat the dust, seeing as he don't give you nothink else to eat. Come, cheer up; a month's but a month, even in a prison, and I and Boxer 'll come and see you. There, dry your eyes; there's a man, and look em all straight in the face; for, thank God as you *can* do so, where there aint no sin there aint no shame; and as for sorer, vy it haint never got no roots to signify unless it's planted in evil. There, there's a man," continued he, as poor Jack at this exordium of his only friend had regained his feet, and was burying his face on Joe's shoulder. "Now look here, Jack, if it war Death himself as you had to face, you've no cause to hang back; on the *contrairy*, you might cry out, 'all right, old fellar, glad to see you; there's only me a-going by a fust-class; no heavy baggage, in the shape of a bad conscience, to go by *your* luggage train; so here goes! and the sooner we're off the better.' That's the way to take things, my boy, and never go for to cry like a babby 'pon count of the willainy of hothers, or you'll have enough to do, I promise you. You should leave tears for the women, poor creatures; they's plenty o' use for em, and could never get along without em; they's tea, and sugar to them, they is. See here, you've often a-vished for my big knife, and I couldn't spare it; but I'll give it you now for a keepsake," said Joe, pulling a curious specimen of

cutlery out of his pocket, in shape and size much resembling a small pistol, containing four different blades, a cork-screw, and a button-hook. At sight of this treasure, poor Jack's eyes actually sparkled through his tears, so blandly, in life's young years, do pain and pleasure blend.

Thus bribed, Jack, flanked by his friend Joe, at length consented to accompany the policeman. As they made their way through the crowd, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars slunk behind a sort of wooden pillar, or shaft, which, with an opposite pendant, divided the office, as it were, into two compartments. It was lucky that he had taken this precaution, or Joe Roberts, in his then frame of mind, might have prematurely ended his brilliant career, and the gibbet have had another victim. As the trio passed out, Union Jack in the centre, between his friend and the policeman, the father's eye chanced to look down, and, out of one of the miserably torn shoes which the bad sovereign had failed to replace, and for trying to pass which he was now being conducted to condign punishment, the clever man perceived a poor little, thin, cold, naked foot protruding. Verily! the complicated chords of that mysterious instrument, the human heart, are a dumb mystery to all save their Creator. He alone can either attune them to harmony collectively, or awaken one singly, and often where it may have remained mute to the strongest appeal, a passing breath can cause it to thrill into a responsive echo; and now, at sight of this small physical ill, the man who had a few minutes before minutely studied, in order to scientifically analyse the moral agony of this poor human scapegoat; the father who had coolly contemplated the wreck of his own child, could not behold this small fragment of that wreck without, for the first time, feeling a sharp, though momentary, pain dart through his heart, like the fang of remorse. With most men, there is a strong sympathy between their hearts and their pockets; but with Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars this sympathy was even more developed than in others. So, almost mechanically, he put his hand into his waistcoat pocket, and drawing

forth a sovereign, dropped it into Jack's ragged cap, that he was carrying between both his hands, as he passed; and this time the sovereign was *not a bad one*. But poor Jack had now acquired a wholesome dread of sovereigns that dropped in in this easy, gentlemanlike manner; so, taking it out of his cap and giving it to Joe, he said—

"I won't have nothing to do with it; perhaps they'll say I stole that next."

"No, no, boy," interposed Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars from behind his hiding-place, somewhat disguising his voice, and also muffling it in his handkerchief, "it is Mr. Smith who gives you that sovereign, to buy shoes with, instead of putting it into the poor-box."

"Much obleeged to Mr. Smith, I'm sure," said Joe, looking round in all directions for that benevolent individual, as he gave the money back to Jack. "I wonder *which* Mr. Smith it is, cause there be such a crop on em; I only wish as oats was as plenty!"

"Oh! I dare say," said a reporter who was standing by, "he's one of those '*Paters Familias*' who write to the *Times* whenever the Thames overflows, or that there is an unusually thick fog, or any other natural phenomenon, which of course the *Times* is expected to attend to and set to rights, as I have no doubt all the Smiths are fathers of families; for that was what they were originally invented for."

Having at length reached the door, at sight of the prison-van poor Jack again went off into a fearful paroxysm of tears.

"Jack, Jack!" remonstrated Joe Roberts, who was almost in as bad a state as himself, "never come for to go on a breakin my heart in this fashion. Cheer up! boy, it aint no fault of yourn; so as I said afore, there aint nothink to be ashamed on. Look here, you're only a goin for a ride in your father's coach; for sich a great man as he be, I s'pose as they'll end by making a Lord on him, and I hope as he'll be called Lord Gallows, for

that would be the fittest title for him. Here's his coronate all ready," added he, pointing to the royal crown and initials on the van, "and V. R., vich stands for wery respectable ! and as for a little hextree hexercise at the tread-mill, vy, it aint arf sich a bad gettin up-stairs, as my settin of you on, a Saturday night, to ax charity of them as never had none, and don't know what it means ; a reglar ass I must have been to iver ave thort of sich a thing ; but you, Jack, as ave been brought hup among osses, you orght to know ow to 'have like a man, and set me an egzample ; so don't keep turning on the water," continued he, lifting Jack tenderly into the van, "cause vy, it's honly a waistin hon a helement as is wery precious ven it's wanted, but wery onpleasant ven it's not : and you take care of that ere sovereign ; it will buy you more bread and cheese than you'll be hable to heat in a month, and you've got my knife to cut it with, and mind as you don't let it get rusty for want of use, that's all ; and as for new boots, don't you trouble about they, father shall make you a pair o' right good uns agin you comes back ; and next Sunday, as soon as the clock strikes five in the artemnoon, you may look out for Boxer and me ; but weigh ! steady, I'd nearly forgot—don't you go for to change that ere sovereign afore you absolutely wants it ; this 'ill keep the devil hout of your pocket (hif he couldn't be kep hout of your pedigree) till Boxer and I comes to see you on Sunday ;" and so saying, Joe placed in Union Jack's hand a shilling and a' miscellany of halfpence : and the van, having now its compliment of felons, the door was locked, and it drove off amid a fresh burst of grief from poor Jack, and "curses—not loud, but deep"—from Joe Roberts, who, slouching his cap over his eyes, pursued his way back to the Tabard, feeling, as he himself afterwards described it to his mother, galled, blind, and spavined, all at once.

The clever man had watched the freighting of the prison-van, from behind the door of the police-office, with a slight tightness round the region where the heart ought to be, and when the driver had sonorously slammed to the door, and

locked it, something like a momentary sharp pain echoed through the aforesaid region ; but no sooner had it driven off and was quite out of sight, and Joe Roberts also, than, like waters meeting and closing over a corse which they had just engulfed, all was calm and serene on the surface, as if no blot had ever been made out of, or on creation ; for conscience is a delicate plant—indigenous to man's primeval Eden—which requires a good soil to take root in, and a constant irrigation of heavenly dew, to prevent its dwindling down into a mere stray rank weed, which cumbers, but cannot chasten. Therefore, as soon as the locomotive prison had turned the corner at the top of the street, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars drew a long breath, adjusted his hat, caressed his whiskers, and looked to the buttons of his gloves, preparatory to again sallying forth ; but as Tim had turned the cabriolet so as to command a full view of Marlborough-street, his master took the precaution of crossing over to ask him if he had seen any one come out of the publisher's while he had been in the police office ? "Like master like man," has as much truth in it as most other proverbs ; consequently Tim, in the "select circles" which he frequented, was considered "somewhat of a literary cove," from the fact of his seldom being without a novel, a newspaper, or the Racing Calendar in his pocket, wherewith to while away the many solitary hours he had to be "in waiting." On the present occasion he had nearly spelt through the *Times*, more especially the most interesting and important portion of it, namely, the column devoted to handing down to posterity the grooms who, in the nineteenth century, have wanted places, and the places which have wanted grooms, as well as the housemaids who have wanted footmen. Being now well up in both these historical epochs, he had just turned to the trade report, and had the satisfaction of ascertaining that "cotton was quiet ; rice rather brisk ;" and that "calves had walked off after the last quotation ;" which latter announcement he, no doubt, thought had reference to the numerous disappointed *Littérateurs* emerging

from the divers publishers in the highly literary *locale* opposite to him; therefore, full of this idea, in reply to his master's query as to whether he had seen any one come out of Messrs. Hum and Balderdashe's, he said—

"I aint seed no calves, sir; I only see a female in black come out about five minutes ago."

"Was she a tall, handsome woman?" further interrogated Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, to make surety doubly sure.

"Oh! dear no sir, quite the contrary of that—dark and short, like a November day, and unkimmin plain about the head, to be sure."

Poor Fraulein's passport thus accurately *visé*, the clever man felt assured that he ran no risk of meeting her at Messieurs Hum and Balderdashe's, and so once more recrossed the street (but this time not on foot), and drawing up at that establishment, jumped out and pushed open the purple-cloth swing door, which seemed not only to have imbibed the deep blue tints of the fair *Bas Blues* who had so often issued through it, but also to vibrate with the contagion of their hopes and fears, so tremulous and palpitating was its motion compared to that of ordinary swing doors.

No sooner had the clever man's face appeared through one of the oval glasses at the top of the door, than an attendant satellite, with a pen behind his ear—with which he had just directed a rejected manuscript—advanced obsequiously to meet him, and, as he always did to any of the magnates of the order, without let or hindrance, or any *pour parlering*, he flung open wide the sacred door of Mr. Hum's sanctum, saying in a loud tone, which showed that he had not inhaled the rarified atmosphere of fashionable novels in vain,

"Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, sir;"

And then, instantly closing the door as suddenly as if it had been that of a trap, (?) withdrew.

Mr. Hum, bowing blandly, rose; laid down the newspaper he had been reading; concealed, under a proof-sheet, the frag-

ment of a biscuit which he was eating ; and deposited his green silk pocket handkerchief upon a letter he had begun to some poor starving author, expressing the high—the *very* high—estimation he entertained of his talents, and the deep regret he felt that his present engagements would not allow of his entering into any arrangement with him for the very clever work he had done him the honour of submitting to his inspection.

“Happy to have the honour of seeing you again so soon, sir,” said Mr. Hum, placing a chair for Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, and with a waive of his hand motioning to him to take it; “curious enough, sir, your name was brought upon the *tapis* in this very room, about half an hour ago. A German lady was here, who said she had the honour of being known to you, and that you thought highly of her literary attainments—so highly that you had just procured her a situation as governess with Mrs. Piers Moncton ; very kind of you, I’m sure sir—very. She wished to publish a translation of some German tales in my miscellany, and asked if I would look them over ; but as she was a *protégée* of yours, sir, I told her that was quite unnecessary ; and so I closed with her at once, and entered into an engagement with her for six months, at sixteen guineas a sheet—our average magazine price, you know, sir ; but if you will ensure a run for her contributions in the fashionable world, sir, I should not mind raising it to nineteen.”

Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars’ only reply was a slight shrug of the shoulders and a strange enigmatical smile, which at once raised—as he knew it would—Mr. Hum’s curiosity, and excited his commercial alarm !

“What ! can it be possible, sir, that after all she is not a *protégée* of yours, and that you do not think highly of her literary abilities ! ”

“Why, as to her being a *protégée*,” responded the clever man, with another shrug, “yes, certainly ; for of course one feels for everything that is unfortunate, especially a woman and a foreigner ; and what little I could do I have done, to assist her, poor

thing : but as for her possessing any literary talent, (and here ensued another shrug, full three inches higher than the former one,) poor thing ! she has strangely mistaken her vocation ; and I candidly tell you, (but of course in strict confidence, my dear Mr. Hum, and to prevent *your* being a loser, for *my name* must not transpire in the matter,) that I think entering into any engagement at all with her, much less such a protracted one as a term of six months, would be a very losing speculation for you."

"Dear me, I'm extremely obliged to you, I'm sure, sir ; I'll write to her immediately and cancel the agreement."

"Mind !" interrupted Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, "that you don't *get me* into any scrape with her ; a male enemy I don't mind, having, I suppose, as many as most men, but women are so cursedly vindictive, they never hate by halves, and besides, poor thing, I should be really sorry to hurt her feelings ; but still, my dear Mr. Hum, I consider it a paramount duty to prevent *your* being swindled to the amount of £108, for that is what it would be."

"Oh, dear sir, no ; of course I'll take very good care *your* name is not brought into the business ; we have always ways of getting out of these things. Upon referring the matter to Mr. Clench, my reader, he found that publishing these German tales would not suit my present engagements ; am exceedingly sorry that I cannot at this precise time avail myself of the services of a lady of such distinguished talents, and more especially of talents of which so great an authority as Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars thinks so highly, &c., &c. something in that style, sir ; you see, quoting *your* name in support of her talents, she never can suspect that *you* have depreciated them."

"Ah !—yes,—that—a,—will do very well ; but what brought me here this morning, Mr. Hum, was to know if you would have any objection to publish a work—say a novel, by me—in favour of protection ? (for I suppose you know that I have joined Lord Redby's party from *conviction* ?)"

Mr. Hum *was* aware of that interesting *fact*;—"For sir," said he, "I was just reading a very high eulogium upon your disinterested abandonment of free trade principles, in 'The Morning Puff,' when you came in."

"Ah! well, what I was going to say," resumed the clever man, "was, that as *you* had published my pamphlet against the Protectionists, perhaps you might not like publishing the other side of the question."

"Makes not the slightest difference to me, sir, anything *you* like to write; *my* politics are on either side, *equally* as long as the percentage is the same, ha! ha! ha!"

"Why certainly it cannot be expected," said the M.P., with a grave look of deprecation at such *mercenary laxity of principle*! mingled at the same time with a benevolent pity, and toleration for the frailty of '*poor human nature*,' "it cannot be expected that men *without* the pale of political life, *can* feel that heart and soul, that *vital*ly conscientious (and he emphasised the last word) interest in the right and the wrong, the *true* and the *false*, which those who throw themselves *à corps perdu* into the arena of politics do."

"I suppose not, sir," rejoined Mr. Hum, fishing up from the depths of a large black morocco blotting book a sheet of stamped paper, whereon to write a memorandum of an agreement to be entered into between Henry Ponsonby Ferrars, Esq., M.P., of the Albany, on the one part, and Humphry Hum, Esq., of No. —Great Marlborough Street, on the other, for a novel, in three vols. (large octavo,) to be entitled

"MY PRINCIPLES."

"Dear me, how stupid!" said the clever man, in reading over the copy *he* had made for Mr. Hum, of that gentleman's memorandum; "how very stupid, I have left out the name of the book—'My Principles.'"

"Oh! *that's* neither here, nor there, sir," retorted the publisher, unintentionally epigrammatic, "this will do very well, it makes no difference, sir."

And having arranged this matter to their mutual satisfaction, the Hum and the humbug parted ; the latter well pleased with (upon the whole) the successful morning he had had ; for had he not seen one of his incumbrances safely incarcerated, and had he not prevented another from entering the lists of literature with himself, and bartering the labours he had so often imposed upon her, for something like an adequate compensation, and the consciousness of these two laudable achievements, gave to his whole appearance the gloss and sheen of satisfaction ; so that on re-entering his cab, he almost involuntarily fell into that sort of spread eagle *pose*, by which poor D'Orsay used to be known a mile off ; but alas ! upon a nearer approach, he had not the *face* to carry out the likeness. Looking at his *Breguet*, he found to his consternation that it was one o'clock ! the hour at which his aunt lunched, for her hours, like her habits, were all dowageresque, breakfasting at nine, lunching at one, and dining at six ; if he could possibly avoid it, he never liked disturbing her at any of her meals, for like the untameable originals of those old lions, which adorn the handles of tea-urns, and the knockers of hall-doors, Lady Mammonton was always particularly fierce at feeding time. The chariot was at the door, for her ladyship's diurnal airing, and although the day was warm, and balmy in the extreme, Pumilion, the butler, ' assisted ' by one of the footmen, was drawing up all the windows, and insinuating a tin of hot water under the rug, very similar to those whereupon confectioners keep tarts warm ; and as nothing could well be more *tart* than Lady Mammonton's temper, this individual tin in a manner followed the same vocation, though with a difference. The dowager lady had married a dowager lord (without incumbrances) very late in life, when both were old enough to have known better, for she was a spinster of forty-five, and Lord Mammonton a widower of sixty-ditto, childless, with large unmortgaged estates, the title becoming extinct at his death ; for the four years the poor man had lived after his marriage, he had been a dull and dutiful

husband ; but from the week following that event, he had dwindled gradually away, visibly dissolving in the vinegar of his wife's temper ; but being a *gentleman* of the *old school*—which always inculcated a sound substratum of Christianity, he having no heirs, direct or collateral—in dying, saw fit to return good for evil, by leaving his countess all his landed and funded property, free and unfettered, at her own disposal ; which testamentary munificence on his part, instantly elevated his widow into a *personnage*, and for which, she evinced her gratitude, by always, from the day of his death, retrospectively referring to him, on all occasions, as ‘poor dear Lord Mammonton.’ But hers was just the sort of character and disposition worthy of having money, and, therefore, it is into such secure, lock-up, impregnable, adamantine hearts that wealth generally flows ; and, although her tastes were sufficiently costly in some things—and she never hesitated in the most liberal manner, to spend thousands and tens of thousands upon herself—yet had she the true alchymistic secret of *accumulation*,—that of saving farthings—and economising in the minutest details, and of never expending, much less bestowing, a *sou* upon others, for her piety was of that resigned, well-disciplined order, which caused her to think that every one occupied the *exact* position in the social scale which God intended them to fill ; and therefore *she* never presumed to interfere with the arrangements of Providence, by ministering to the wants, mitigating the afflictions, or warding off the perils of her less fortunately circumstanced fellow-creatures ; in short, she was pre-eminently endowed with the Frenchman's receipt for getting well through the world :—

“*Mauvais cœur et bonne digestion.*”

From a long life of gilded selfishness, Lady Mammonton had become the sun of her own social system ; *she* herself, *she*, *was* (in her own estimation) the only authentic precedent for all circumstances, moral or physical ; consequently, even in an illness that *she* had never had, she did not believe ; and as to *all*

misfortunes, she was of course an utter sceptic, having all *her* life been guarded against them by the impregnable bulwark of WEALTH, so that neither *calumny*, *conspiracy*, *defamation*, nor any other sort of moral assassination existed, according to *her* fiat, save in the inflated regions of fiction, for the *there* legitimate purpose of working out a plot; and, although she could, on her ONE idol, SELF, lavish thousands, yet being both practically and theoretically parsimonious in the extreme, she also indulged in the most wonderful theoretical financial *toirs de force* for *others*; such, for instance, as the axiom that if persons had but twopence a week to live upon, it would be but *prudent* to save three-halfpence a week out of it! the *possibility* of the achievement forming no part of *her* calculations; for *that* would have been coming to the most *exigent* of all things—*facts*, an infected region, where *she* *prudently* never ventured when her fellow-creatures' miseries were located there. It is perhaps needless to add that such a self-worshipper, self-sacrificer, and self-sufficer, had not a human sympathy to spare for any created thing, and least of all for that most prevalent of organic diseases—enlargement of the heart, bounded on every side by the straits of an empty purse. *She* was not poor, *she* had never been in difficulties of any kind, *ergo*, when others were, it was of course all their own fault, and entirely owing to their own *imprudence*!

Ye poor IMPRUDENTS! after the Mammonton fashion! that is, all those who have human hearts throbbing with heaven-tuned impulses, that out of your own most dire necessities can still find *something* to spare for those of your fellow-creatures; be not too downcast, for verily if that scanty garment, CHARITY, covereth a multitude of sins, *such* IMPRUDENCE, with its downy lining of warm sympathy, concealeth a multitude of kindred VIRTUES.

"Lady Mammonton was the sole surviving sister of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' mother, her maiden name having been Ponsonby, and her marriage had taken place some years prior to

the birth of her nephew; as she was now seventy-three, and at the death of her sister—which occurred two years after the demise of Mr. Ferrars, her husband—Lady Mammonton then being a widow, in full power, had, at that event, adopted her orphan nephew, thereby thinking that she had *compounded in the lump* by this one act, for all future and minor acts of compassion or benevolence, as she did for her other taxes, deeming it cheaper and less troublesome. The result of her system of education and *judicious* training, we have already seen in the career of her highly intellectual and totally unprincipled nephew; for every process of mental improvement should have a direct or indirect reference to the ultimate development of spiritual life, or it will not only fail in achieving its purport, but will wrap into tortuous deformity, *even* the very noblest organizations.

“Has my aunt lunched yet?” asked Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, as he sprang from his cabriolet.

“No, sir; her ladyship is still at luncheon,” said Pumlion, removing his head from the carriage, where, like his interrogator, he had been looking after her ladyship’s *tin* (!)

“But you can go in, sir; for Jacobs the broker, from War-dour Street, is there.

“What then; has she bought that old bugle tapestry?”

“No, sir; I don’t think it’s that; her ladyship is a making of a collection of hantique jewellery, sir; I think it is something of that sort that Jacobs has brought her.”

“Just go and ask her, will you, if she’ll see me? Say I shan’t detain her a moment, as I see she’s going out; only I’ve something important to tell her.”

For this affectionate nephew was punctilious in the extreme, not to agitate his amiable relative’s nerves or ruffle her temper, (which always had a sympathetic effect upon her cheque-book,) by obtruding himself unbidden upon her august presence. No wonder, therefore, that she thought him the *beau idéal* of good

breeding—the only genuine good breeding, that which, like charity, *begins at home*—as well as the phoenix of intellectual pre-eminence, though it is not *only* old women who see all things through the medium of their own spectacles. Pumlion soon returned, saying that her ladyship would see him for a *minute*, but that he was not to detain her longer.

Upon entering the dining-room the clever man found his aunt, with one hand, eating a *consommé*, out of a jewelled *sève* broth basin (a former present from himself,) with a portrait of Louis Quatorze, in a medallion on one side of it, and of Mademoiselle de Fontange on the other; while, with her left hand, she was minutely examining an antique ring—of one very large heart-shaped brilliant, surmounted by a true lover's knot in rubies; Jacob Jacobs was standing at some little distance, and the table was strewed with one or two rare carcanets, or jewelled necklaces, as old as Edward the Third's time, and châtelaines of more modern date. Upon her nephew's entrance the old lady did not raise her eyes or desist from either of her avocations, but merely muttered, reproachfully, shaking her head by way of accompaniment—

“My dear Henry, you know that *one* is my hour for luncheon, and that I hate to be detained from my drive immediately after, by visits.”

“My dearest aunt, nothing but an important communication which I have to make to you, and which I think will give you pleasure to hear, could excuse my intruding upon you at this, I know, inconvenient hour.”

So saying, he gave, or rather flung a slight nod of recognition to Jacobs, while Lady Mammonton, somewhat mollified by this preamble, looked up at him for an instant, as she tendered the ring she was holding for his inspection, and said,—

“I know, Henry, you have very good taste. Tell me what you think of this ring, and whether you don't think it dear, for Mr. Jacobs asks five hundred guineas for it; but then, he says it is authentically historical, having been given by Queen Eliza-

beth to Lady Hunsdon, and by her to an ancestress of the lady who wishes to dispose of it."

"I don't think, sir," put in Jacobs, "that you will call it dear, totally setting aside its historical, and merely looking to its intrinsic value, for, as I was observing to her ladyship, the brilliant is not only as large as a cherry, but so thick, wherein consists the real value of diamonds, that in the trade, it could be easily converted into three rings that would *look* equally well, and remain equally large in diameter."

As Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars took the ring, a dark and crowded expression of mixed passions for a moment jostled each other through all his features, but, suddenly clearing his brow, he ran out into great admiration of its beauty, and its genuine Elizabethan setting, declaring that he did not think it at all dear, looking to the size, water, and thickness of the diamond; and advising his aunt, by all means, to secure it immediately.

"I think, sir," said Jacobs, "you will find it still less dear, when I tell you that it is supposed to be—the supposition amounting nearly to a certainty—the identical ring which Elizabeth gave Essex, and which Lady Nottingham so treacherously omitted returning to the Queen till too late."

"Indeed!" responded Lady Mammonton's nephew, while his eyes wandered vacantly, yet intently, over the splendid bauble, as if pondering whether the bright but ill-fated spirit of Robert Devereux might not have passed into it, and continued contagiously at once to sway, and to mar, its inanimate destinies.

"I suppose," said his aunt (appealing to Jacobs), as she took the ring from him, placed it on her skinny finger, and held out her hand at arm's length, the better to judge of its brilliant effect—

"When you say five hundred guineas, you mean five hundred pounds, for no one pays in guineas now."

"I beg your ladyship's pardon—I mean five hundred *guineas*. I would buy it myself at that price, rather than the lady

to whom it belongs should receive a shilling less for it than that sum, as this is the second time, within a few months, that necessity has compelled her, poor thing, to place it at my disposal; and, indeed, in a mere mercantile point of view, I consider that *within* its value."

"Oh!" said Lady Mammonton, with a contemptuous toss of her head, "of course people are always in terrible distress when they want to sell things—one hears of nothing else but needy people, and people in difficulties now-a-days. For my part I'm sick of all this wonderful misery, and have no patience with it; it's all owing to their own imprudence and extravagance. Why don't they live *within* their incomes, as I do; *I'm* never in difficulties."

"Perhaps," said Jacobs, with a peculiar smile, which Pasquin might have borrowed without any very usurious interest, "it is because everybody has not the same *commodious* income to *live within*, as your ladyship."

"All nonsense; thousands or hundreds make, or at least ought to make, no difference."

"But your ladyship forgets there are wretches who do not even know what it is to have a *fixed* parish allowance, amounting to a few shillings, much less a *certain* income amounting to hundreds, or even to a solitary hundred!"

"Then they must only graduate the scale: if they can't afford a whole loaf, let them learn to be content with half-a-one."

"But if,"—further objected the unbelieving Jew!—"they have not the means of obtaining *even* half-a-one, what would your ladyship *then* propose as a remedy for their hunger?"

"Let them go without," flattered this so rigidly moral lady, on the score of *finance*, as she turned the facets of her five hundred guinea ring, so as to catch another phase of their refractions.

"Were the remedy but as feasible as it is economical and concise, the poor laws would require no amendment," responded Jacobs, as he began gathering together the rest of his jewel-

lery, and replacing the different articles in their respective cases, while Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, somehow not relishing the turn the dialogue had taken between this Christian lady and the Jew, made a generous little anticipatory plunge into the coffers of the former, by saying—

“My dearest aunt, rather than you should not have that ring, I will gladly pay the odd twenty-five pounds, and then-I hope you will consider it a *little*—a very little as my gift.”

But Lady Mammerton, true to her colours wherever money was concerned, shook her head and merely growled out, as she told her nephew to ring the bell for Pumilion to bring her her cheque-book out of her dressing-room, “That’s all nonsense, you know, my dear Henry, for *your* presents always come out of *my* pocket, and you know I’m very *independent*. I never ask or accept favours from any one, and although poor dear Lord Mammonton had so much influence in the political world, as indeed his Memory has to this day, and by one word to the minister I could get appointments, or redress, that might save people from ruin, I have always been too proud and *too independent*! to utter that word; so that, my dear Henry, you will find that I have not frittered away *your* interest by doing things for other people.”

Here ensued a string of florid compliments from the clever man, to his equally clever relative, upon the noble virtue of independence, as poised upon the solid bases of wanting nothing *oneself*, and doing nothing for the wants of others, as practised by that amiable lady; which eulogistic flow was only interrupted by the return of Pumilion with the cheque-book.

Lady Mammonton having written Jacobs a draft for the £525, he placed it in his pocket-book, and departed with the remainder of his *Moyen age joyeaux*, which she did not purchase on that occasion.

No sooner did he find himself *tête-à-tête* with his aunt, than Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars immediately proceeded to inform her, that, from a profound deference to her superior judgment, and

a conviction that her experience must know better than his inexperience (?) he had, at the loss of a large slice of public esteem, and its small change popularity, joined Lord Redby's party. At this intelligence, the Dowager's eyes actually sparkled with delight, but the first words she uttered were in the form of a question—

• “Well, my dear, and what have you got?”

“Why, my dear aunt, nothing—as *yet*—for with that d—d freedom of the press, which exists in this country, and which is very convenient on *one* side, but monstrously inconvenient on the other, I should be torn to pieces, if I *began* by taking office; but all that will come in good time, and in the meanwhile, as long as I have *your* approbation, my dearest aunt, I want no other reward.”

“Well, I must say, Henry,” responded the old lady, with a gracious smile, holding out two-fingers to him, “you have acted extremely sensibly, and I am very much pleased with you,—*very much*; and as you now belong to a respectable party in politics, I dare say you—want a little money,—eh?”

“You are too kind, my dear aunt, and if you could conveniently let me have a couple of hundred pounds, I don't pretend to say, that it wouldn't be of great use to me just now.”

“I've been thinking, Henry,” said she, while she dipped her pen into the ink to write another cheque, what a capital match Lady Mabel Malden would be for you, and I wonder you have not thought of it too, her jointure is nine thousand a year, besides that house on Richmond-terrace, or Whitehall-gardens, which do they call it? and the plate and diamonds; so that you would have your *ménage* ready *monté*, and such a fine woman besides.”

“I *have* thought of it (!) my dear aunt; only Malden being so recently dead, you see, one cannot commence operations immediately!”

“There,” said her ladyship, pushing him over the draft, “we Tories always do things handsomely, as you will find, now

that you have joined them ; you asked for £200, and I have given you £500, that is £475, as I have deducted the twenty-five pounds you said you would give towards this ring." This trait of microscopic meanness, was worthy of the royal miser and virago, whose ring she had just bought, but she chuckled again at the idea of this sapient economy made upon her own monies, while her nephew was profuse in his expressions of gratitude and affectionate admiration of her liberality ! as he handed her into her carriage, preparatory to his getting into his own, and driving to the chambers of his legal adviser, Mr. Littlego Slimeycraft. Perhaps, we are only informing the sagacious reader of what no doubt he or she has all along suspected, namely, that Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars and Mr. Henry, of Magnolia Lodge, poor Florence Wilmot's husband, are one and the same person ; as let us hope for the honor of human nature, that there are not two such. His plan, advised by and digested with Slimeycraft, was under the pretext of getting his wife out to the Mediterranean in a yacht, to ship her off to Sydney, calculating that she would die on the voyage, long before she arrived, and so effectually rid him of that great stumbling-block to his future schemes, while in the hurry and flurry of embarking, the children were to be put on board another vessel bound for Natal ; his intention was not actually to allow them to starve, but to have them brought up as the children of a common labourer, ignoring their real name and parentage, which would effectually prevent their ever obtruding their legitimacy upon him, so as to mortgage any of his future possessions ; and that morning, finding that Lady Hunsdon's ring was safe in his aunt's possession, and had realized five hundred guineas, he resolved to make this cruelly obtained sum of his victim's defray the expenses of her own banishment, and the ruin of her children ; this was a subtle stroke of villany, which his prototype the arch fiend might have envied him. The only drawback to this well-digested scheme, was Mrs. Bousefield's sharp, prying, ubiquitous eyes, and glibly hung tongue ; but he did not doubt, but that Slimeycraft, (knowing

what a sinner he was,) could also be got to enact a publican, and like a second Bousefield! carry off this widowed Helen. It was for the accomplishment of this plot, that he had been in reality waiting, more than for the demise of his aunt, when he had entreated Edith to accept him as a lover on trial, for a few months, and had assured her in all *sincerity* that he would not *hurry* her into a marriage!

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION XIV.

"And we, indeed, justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss."

Luke xxiii. 40.

"The young year, blushing and trembling 'twixt the striving kisses of parting spring and meeting summer, seems their only parallel."

"Oh! love like theirs is lent to earth, not given,
And has no wings, but what soar back to heaven!"

Unpublished Play.

"A man of *business* may *talk* of philosophy :—
A man who has no business may *practise* it."

ONCE more Parliament had met for the *delay* of business, and that season, which with a laudable retrospective affection for "the things that have been," we traditionally call "The Spring," had again come round in London, and during the intervening months, the wheel of fortune (since so rich a lady modestly always drives the same *one-wheeled* vehicle), had more than once hitched against unforeseen obstacles, or stuck in the mire, with some of the most skilful charioteers who had essayed to guide it. Such, even, had been the case with Mr. Benaraby and his *fides achates* of patent cleverness, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars. The former, at starting, had broken down in his budget, owing to having obstinately resisted the sage financial advice of his more experienced friend, Sir Benjamin Bullion; so that, notwithstanding the finished oratory of his five hours' speech, the Redby administration, like the armadillo at the Zoological Gardens, had

no sooner got in, than it was out again. And yet it might be truly said of Mr. Benaraby's eloquence, as it has been said of Robertson the historian's style, that it was "flowing, equal, and majestic; harmonious beyond that of most English speakers;" yet seldom deviating in quest of harmony into inversion, redundancy, or affectation. Moreover, as a politician, he reversed the idiosyncrasy of Tacitus, whose verve consists in making every word say as much as possible; for the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer's art lay in managing, during his longest orations, to make every word say—that is, commit itself and him—as little as possible; which fully accounted, perhaps, for his not being as luminous as so sagacious a mind, so keen an observer of men and things, almost *jure divino* ought to have been; or, as one who in his closet, studied men as a great composer might a difficult musical score, and in public evinced the fruits of this study, by playing upon them with infinite skill, and extemporising all sorts of brilliant and daring variations. Still scanning him by the text of the Roman critic, he was not luminous either in his speeches or in his writings.

"Cui lecta potentior erit res,
Nec facundia deseret hunc, nec lucidus ordo."

Though it might be that the real secret of his non-lucidity was his want of sincerity, for TRUTH is the nucleus of all light. Indeed, to use an expression of Milton's, which, I believe, has already been applied to Lord Chatham, "he had not *even* the correctness so striking in the great Roman orator, but he *had* the *verba ardentia*—the bold, glowing words."

Yet, nothing daunted, Mr. Benaraby sat amid the crumbling ruins of his sudden splendour, as Gibbon did among those of Rome, pondering upon the great work upon which his future fame was to rest. It was amid the ruins of the Capitol, while the bare-footed friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, that the historian mused over the plan of his "Decline and Fall;" and it was amid the destruction of the *capital*,

whilst the bare-faced members were talking nonsense in the Chapel of St. Stephen's, that the floored financier meditated upon his "fall, and future rise!"

On the other hand, the weft of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' political disappointment was woofed with many minor ones of a domestic, and therefore of a less magniloquent, nature. In the first place, poor Florence, with that obstinacy peculiar to the genus WIFE, had neither died, nor allowed her tender husband to practically evince his patronage of emigration by expatriating her and her children; so that on that score he had but one consolation, which was, that *die* she *must soon*, and then he would find no difficulty in disencumbering himself of the children. Meanwhile, his eldest son was likely to get the start of him, in his public career, as having left the treadmill a finished and hardened *vaurien*, poor Union Jack, now in Newgate for having been connected with a gang of house-breakers, whose acquaintance he had made in his first prison, was about to get a government appointment to the Colonies, so that at all events there was one of his encumbrances provided for. But still the clever man had other sources of domestic irritation to contend with: for Lady Mammonton, with that charming inconsistency for which some old ladies are so celebrated, upon the dissolution of the Redby Ministry, had tartly upbraided him for his want of political prescience, in having ratted at so unpropitious a moment, and not having known the ins and outs of things better—more especially the latter. Though we must in justice to her nephew state, that notwithstanding the speedy annihilation of the party he had joined, nothing could have been more exemplary than his external deportment since he had become a Conservative. For like Horace Walpole, he had "gone to church sometimes to induce his servants to go to church;" though, also, like the Strawberry Hill worthy, he did not "persuade them to believe what he didn't believe himself;" but thought with that other accomplished gentleman, that a good moral sermon now and then might instruct and benefit them,

though he scrupulously (if not exactly religiously) refrained, as we have before said, from persuading them to believe. He only set them the example of listening.

But from the philosophy and philanthropy of this distinguished pair of senators, though not exactly of statesmen, we will turn to the quiet, small, deep current of Edith's life; whose surface was alone ruffled or smoothed by the ebb and flow of her own spirit within it, or brightened by the Heaven above, which in all its alternations it still endeavoured to mirror. Such gentle, humble rills, we doubt not, being the only ones that will reach in unsullied purity the vast ocean of eternity! while the dashing, noisy, foaming, headlong torrents, whose turbid whirlpools break in chiliar echoes over the world's high places, may with their bursting bubbles blot the great judgment book; but that is all.

Towards the autumn of the preceding year, Harold Lancaster had declared his love to Edith; but, alas! had also declared his poverty. He had, he said, but £300 a-year, and therefore had still his way to make in the world; but the Duchess of Liddesdale was a relation of his, and he had no doubt from the great fancy she had taken to Edith, would use her influence with her son and with others to push his fortunes. Would she then, could she—she the “admirer of all admirers,” consent to link her fate with one who had nothing to offer her but a heart, he hoped he might say without presumption, not quite unworthy of her—but a lot, in a worldly point of view, totally so? Edith smiled through her happy tears, and said it might be foolish, but she was so glad that he was not rich, selfishly glad, for her own sake only; for the wife of a poor man had so many, so very many more ways of proving her love than the wife of a rich man could possibly have. At this, Lancaster caught her in his arms, and pressed her to his heart, with an ardour that might have crushed so fragile a form, had she not had such a strong bulwark of love around her own heart.

“Then,” cried he, “I may speak to the Archdeacon, and to Mrs. Dunbar?”

"No," said she, with what would have been a slight frown but that it was instantly dispelled by the brightest of smiles; "generally speaking, I have a horror of anything clandestine; but as the Archdeacon would never give *his* consent, were it necessary—which, thank Heaven! it is not—and as poor dear grandmamma would ask me at least fifty times a day when we were to be married, I don't see the use of telling either of them, till you are in a position to marry; more especially as I am, what I suppose Mr. Albert Smith would call 'an old young lady,' being two-and-twenty, and therefore my own mistress."

"My own love is right," replied her affianced husband. "Communicating our engagement to them, so long beforehand, would only be subjecting you to ceaseless annoyance; but you *will* let me tell that dear, kind Duchess of Liddesdale of it, won't you, for she takes such an interest in you?"

"No, I will not let you tell her. I will tell her of it myself; for she has been so very kind to me that I think it is the least I can do, as there is nothing so ungracious as deputy thanks, or so hollow and questionable as the gratitude that cannot speak for itself, but employs a proxy. I remember Alciphron Murray once gave himself a great deal of trouble, and, what to him was an infinitely greater sacrifice, subjected himself to all the coarse rebuffs one is sure to encounter in this Christian country, if one presumes to ask any one to help one in serving a fellow-creature. Well, Murray took all this trouble in trying to get a young gentleman a commission; and the said young gentleman's 'mamma' did all the thanks, after the usual set, ready cut-and-dried, established tariff; but the young gentleman himself did not, like Cardinal Beaufort, 'die' and make no sign, but he lived, and made no sign."

"Que voulez vous?" as the Duchess of Liddesdale says; "we are, God bless us! the worst-mannered and most prickly-pear sort of people in the world."

"Which," rejoined Edith, "must arise from torpidity, not to say total absence of feeling; for although it is not given to

every one to have polished, or even suave and amiable manners, yet it is given to every animal, even including those who are denied the power of speech, to evince feeling, where any exists. But I have always remarked that if you render, or try to render an English person a service, they immediately freeze up into a stand-off rigidity of manner, as if your secret motive must be either to injure them, or from a selfish and sinister design; and they were determined to show you that they saw through and resented your motive, notwithstanding the apparent disinterested kindness of your actions."

"All this arises, my own Edith, from the narrow, sectarian compression of all our systems of education. Instead of trying to *expand* the affections, which are naturally only too much prone to the narrowing influence of concentration, everything is done to contract them: *oneself* and *one's family*, that is our creed. And with this little restricted circle, we are actually taught to consider that our world ends. The fault perhaps originates with the clergy, who, after they have (to borrow Gibbon's expression) been 'steeped to the eyes in port and prejudices among the monks of Oxford,' and they take orders, think it necessary to elongate into petrified sticks. All kindness *to*—all consolation *to*—all communing *with*—the living, (save in a mundane and conventional manner) seem to be excluded from their rubric. 'The visitation of the sick, and the burial of the dead,' they of course attend to, as the Book of Common Prayer ordains, and as the salary they receive exacts; but that they should teach the living *how* to live, and to cheer the weary uphill road of life, by occasionally helping them to bear their burdens, never seems (with a few rare and radiant exceptions) to enter into their covenant or their contemplation. While this state of things exists, missions may multiply and churches culminate; but still, in the wide and only *real* acceptance of the term, we are *not* CHRISTIANS. For, verily, to freeze up the warm catholic sympathies of Christianity into sectarian segments, and trite, tag Methodist hymn-book quotations, is

blasphemy against its Divine founder; who while on earth fused His Godhead into beneficent *deeds*; *humanised* all His precepts through *social* intercourse with the poor sinners whom he had come to save; and made Truth lovely by example!"

"Harold, dear Harold!" said Edith, looking into her lover's eyes with her whole soul, so as to meet his, "why do you not take orders?"

"Because," said he, "I myself require teaching, and therefore am not fit to teach."

"I think, on the contrary, you *are* fit to teach, for you know and *feel* the truth; and when that is the case, conscientiousness *must* influence the action of the understanding, and at once impel and control all its expressions, whether written or spoken."

Lancaster shook his head.

"No, no, dear Edith; with all my schooling, with all my self-discipline, I feel I am still too much the creature of impulse to presume to take upon myself the sacred responsibility of becoming one of God's delegates. If, upon the whole, the mind has received a *right* bias, and principle has been implanted early enough, and tended sufficiently carefully to have taken a firm root, impulsive characters, in a *worldly* point of view, will do, comparatively speaking, little harm, beyond lacking that cold spirit of calculation which may occasionally compromise self. But it is far otherwise in spiritual matters; for in such, impulse is often apt to be mistaken for a supernatural inner light, and listened to as the direct and authoritative voice of God, making *special* revelations of unsuspected truths and of undefined duties, independent of his established Word; and those who practically act upon, or even speculatively hold such views, claim (without the sin of *intentional* presumption) to be divinely taught by the mysterious whisperings of the oracle within them. And thus they do not subject their mental operations, or rather their psychological phantasmas, to the usual fallibility of human nature, but hold God to be their proximate cause. Impulses are nothing more than blossoms which *may* ripen into fruit, or

may be blighted and scattered by a single adverse breath ; but they are blossoms which invariably spring from one root, and that root is enthusiasm ; for cold characters have no impulses. And knowing, as I do, that enthusiasm is the substratum of my nature, I should fear, that were I to erect a temple to the living God upon so volcanic a basis, it might explode into fanaticism, —and instead of the pure, steady flame of that sacred fire which should alone burn on his altars, it might fling up to Heaven, in lurid and fitful bursts, only the bituminous smoke of intemperate zeal, and the molten lava of fused, but still burning passions.”

“No, no,—not so, Harold : forewarned, fore-armed. Knowing as you do your own tendency to enthusiasm, you would keep a constant watch over yourself, that this source of all right and noble feelings should not degenerate into fanaticism ; and on the other hand, it is not possible to do God’s work with too much zeal. And yet, perhaps, I am selfish in urging you to enter a profession for which *I* think you eminently fitted ; for *me*, I don’t deny but it would be a foretaste of Paradise to go to Heaven hand-in-hand with you ; to hear, as God’s Sabbath came round, from *your* lips those blessed promises which you could not indeed make more divine, but which (at least to me) you would make more intelligible,—for, coming from you, they would go straight to my heart. And then, too, dear Harold ! to think that your labours would also be mine,—your goal my goal ; our hopes *one*, our joys *one*, our fears *none* ! Not as it is in this weary work-a-day, hollow, false, disappointing world, where all men’s avocations tend to lead them farther and farther from God and Nature, and to loosen those ties which their joint wisdom and omniscience have bound. Could not the Duke of Liddesdale give you a living ?—and with that, and the £300 a-year you already have, and my few paltry thousands saved from the wreck, we should be rich—passing rich, dear Harold, in a quiet parsonage, away from this great boiling, bubbling, toil-and-trouble cauldron of a town !”

"And *would* my own queen-like Edith, my pearl of pearls, my fourth Grace, and my tenth Muse, leave this vast orb, where she shines out so resplendently, to shroud herself in the nebula of my lowly fortunes, in some obscure village?—could she leave all this for *my* sake?"

"Harold!" replied Edith, looking with holy earnestness up into his face,—“when we quit the fever and turmoil of earth for the soul's eternal home, you know we take nothing with us but that soul; that is indeed all I have to bring you: but it is yours; therefore, what think you I shall have to regret *here*?”

"Edith! my own, own Edith!" cried he, again pressing her to his heart, "if ever soul went ready-angelized to heaven it will be yours; and I have but one prayer, that mine may be there before, to witness its bright advent."

Here their conference was interrupted by a carriage stopping at the door; and immediately after, the Archdeacon's sonorous "a-hemming!" was heard upon the stairs.—Edith seated herself at her embroidery frame, and Lancaster took up his hat, ready to depart. A slight frown knit Samuel Panmuir's brow upon finding him tête-à-tête with his cousin; but she quickly dispelled it by asking him if he could let her have the carriage to go as far as Carleton Gardens, as she wanted to see the Duchess of Liddesdale particularly."

"Of course, my dear, it is perfectly at your service," was the bland reply.

And leaving Mr. Lancaster to the pleasure of the Archdeacon's society, she quitted the room, and was not long in getting ready for her drive. She found the Duchess not only at home, but alone in her boudoir; and kind as usual. When Edith, with some hesitation and many blushes, had confided to her the one great secret of her life, a gleam of radiant satisfaction for a moment shot across the matron's handsome face, as if cordially participating in her young friend's happiness; but suddenly she sighed, and shook her head, saying—

"Well, there is an end of *my* castle that I have been build-

ing,—for, as I have often said, I should be the happiest of mothers if Liddesdale was just such another exemplary being as Harold Lancaster; and it may be motherly partiality, but I really *do* think he is almost as good. I have, at the same time, said I should like him to have just such a wife as Edith Panmuir; for you know, my dear child, those who have much would always have more.”

“Ah! my dear duchess,” laughed Edith, “were you a London mother—which you are not—I should think that in the delight of your son having escaped the fatality of making so bad a match, you did not mind stretching a point to flatter a silly girl’s vanity: but as I know you to be sincerity itself, or I could not love you as I do, you have done much more, for you have flattered my heart; and, in return, I hope your son may have a wife in every way more worthy of him; and who will find as much favour in your indulgent eyes as I have done.”

“Amen!” responded the Duchess. “And now what is to be done for Lancaster, to prop up his poor little £300 a year?—which, like all non-eating young ladies in love, you seem to think possesses the elastic properties of extending over, and sufficing for all imaginable wants, and all unimaginable exigencies.”

“I know it would for mine, and I think it would for his,” said Edith.

“Don’t be too sure, child, for men are *exigeants* animals on the score of finance. A woman’s wants *may* be,—though for the honour of my sex I am sorry to say that they rarely are compressed into a nutshell; whereas, a man’s are generally diffused over a world. But what are your wishes for Lancaster? that I may make them known to Liddesdale. And I’m sure he’ll do all he can to forward them.”

“*My* great wish, I own, is,” replied Edith, “that he should go into the Church; but *he* objects, from conscientious scruples.”

“Well, then, *those* are things that we must not meddle with,

much less force ; so now think of something else : a commissionership of Excise ; a lordship of the Admiralty ! Would anything of that kind do ? ”

“ Dear duchess, how kind, how considerate you are ! ” said Edith, raising her hand to her lips, as her own eyes filled with tears. “ I know the proverb, that beggars must not, at least, that they ought not, to be choosers ; and yet, anything that would take us out of London I should prefer ; for it appears to me that in this great Babylon no woman can hope to retain more than a very homœopathic particle of her husband’s heart.”

“ Very well then, little miser ! as you want to monopolize the *whole* of that conjugal Eldorado, I think we had better *fix* upon nothing, but leave the matter entirely to Liddesdale who, I know, will not be wanting, either in zeal or generosity.”

Edith thought so too ; and after a prolonged conversation, the friends separated, but only to meet the more frequently. And that autumn the Duchess took Edith on a little Continental tour with her to the German spas : Harold Lancaster was, of course, their *cavaliero*, as the young duke, his mother said, was very busy in Scotland, superintending the improvements he was making at Glenfern. The trio wintered in Paris, and being now domiciled together, Edith and her intended had the satisfaction of daily finding that their maturer judgment more and more approved the choice their hearts had so spontaneously made.

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION XV.

"His secret is with the righteous.—*Prov. iii. 32.*

"Nature, and time, and earth and skies,
Thy heavenly skill proclaim;
What shall we do to make us wise
But learn to read Thy name!"

"As on the rock the Pharos gleams above,
So o'er life's sea still glows a mother's love."

"Love is a circle, and an endless sphere;
From good to good, revolving here and there."

HERRICK.

"Set high in spirit, with the precious taste
Of sweet philosophy."

As the Archdeacon decidedly disapproved of Mr. Lancaster's "infesting his house," as he expressed it; and was, moreover, angry with Edith for having "managed so badly" as not to have contrived in some way or other, to have lured the Duke of Liddesdale to Paris, during the winter she had passed there with his mother; the lovers were perforce obliged to have most of their meetings at the Duchess of Liddesdale's. Edith had been spending the day with her, specially invited to do so, as she expected her son to arrive in town that evening, and was anxious, as she said, to present him to Edith; Harold Lancaster was to make the quartet. But as accidents will happen in the best regulated families, so in like manner will misunderstandings between the best regulated lovers; and Edith had been at

a *déjeuner* at Lady Larpingham's, Cecil Trevelyan's mother, at Twickenham, the day before, where Harold had *not* been, and some d—d good-natured friend (of which there are always plenty) had told him that she had been guilty of *leze-fiancé*, by being in excellent spirits, and having twice danced with Trevelyan; consequently the whole of this day Lancaster had riveted his large, eloquent eyes upon hers—not angrily, certainly, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, but sorrowfully and reproachfully, which is love's worst anger. The evening sun was now sinking into its crimson bed in the west, and its departing rays, streaming like a blush through the rose-coloured silk blinds of the hostess's boudoir—for it was there they generally sat when *en petit comité*; the Duchess was busily sealing and directing sundry letters for the post. Having now closed the last of her correspondence, she blew out the taper, and rising, said, as she gathered up her letters,—

"Dear me! it's later than, I thought; I must go and dress for dinner, for I expect Liddesdale every minute. Harold, you will make him and Edith known to each other, if I'm not down; though I've told him so much about her, and her so much about him, that I should think they were pretty well acquainted with each other already."

She had no sooner closed the door than, to avoid what he in reality longed for—an explanation,—(for lovers are *the* most jesuitical creatures in the world)—he sauntered to the piano, and began running over the keys with a sort of harmonious
• febrile excitement.

"Do sing me something!" said Edith, timidly, without, however, following him to the instrument, or even moving out of her chair. After one loud and chaotic crash, to conclude the fantasia he had been playing, he glided into the most thrilling and melodious symphony, and sang, to a charmingly soft and exquisitely touching Portuguese air, the following

Song.*

"If mine eyes have wearied thee,
Gazing into thine;
If thy lips can smiling be
Far away from mine;
If the voice that once was dear,
Whispering so low,
Falls all untuneless on thine ear,—
Tell me it is not so.

"If thy heart be beating still,
Who knows for whom it be?
Let me—'tis my wandering will—
Think 'tis still for me;
If those blushes on thy cheek
Can now for others glow;
Look earnest in mine eyes, and speak,
And tell me 'tis not so!

"If I deceive myself, 'tis clear,
No others can deceive;
So tell me all I wish to hear,
I swear I will believe!
I would not, dearest, die of love,
There's sunshine yet below;
So look upon that star above,
And swear that 'tis not so."

Edith rose, her eyes as full of tears as her lover's voice had been, and walked towards the piano, no doubt fully prepared to take the required oath; when the Duchess's maid came into the room for a letter which the former had forgotten; whereupon Lancaster got up from the instrument, and said in a perfectly well-bred, disembarassed voice, suited to their additional auditor—

"Now, Miss Panmuir, it is your turn." She took the

* This little gem, worthy of Herrick, or George Herbert, or even of Tennyson, appeared anonymously in the *North Wales Chronicle* of December the 3rd, 1853.

proffered place, and sang the reply which Langly, the *femme de chambre's* arrival, had prevented her whispering to him in plain prose—if, indeed, the language of love is ever that.

Edith's Song.

"I would be near thee, but ever near thee,
Still watching o'er thee as the angels are,
And when thou art sad be there to cheer thee,
As e'en in the desert shines some lone star."

"I'd fain be the breeze that kisses thy cheek,
And plays 'mid the mazes of thy soft hair,
Whispering the love that I may not speak,
Save in my soul, where it breathes in a prayer."

"I'd be the cloud that is fitting above thee;
Oh, fleetly I'd pass, and leave heaven bright—
Bright in its power to bless and to love thee,
Steeping thy soul in its own hallow'd light."

"I'd be the river, the swift rushing stream,
Bounding towards thee in every billow:
And I'd be at night, some fairy-like dream
Of love, linked with hope, haunting thy pillow."

"For I would be near thee, *ever* near thee,
Watching o'er *thee*, as the angels are;
And when thou art sad be there to cheer thee,
As e'en on the desert beams some lone star."

The next moment Harold was kneeling before her, and had taken both her hands in his.

"Edith, dear Edith, forgive me," said he, looking imploringly into her face. "I have been very wayward, very unjust, all this day; but then, like all other tyrants, love is wayward and unjust, and yet I cannot dethrone him if I would."

"And *would* you, if you could?" asked she, with a pensive smile, the tender melancholy of which had a slight tinge of reproach in it.

"Well, I'm not sure; all fanatics are guilty of occasional

heresies, and there is no such thing as *l'amore dominatore* without the *amor geloso* ! being its shadow, and then the very intoxication of the draughts we quaff from his kingly cup, has for its reaction a sort of wayward madness. And now, ever since the Duchess has said that she so wished you had been the wife of her son, horrible doubts occasionally haunt my heart as to whether, with such a brilliant position within your reach, you will not, *at least in secret*, repent having linked your fate with obscurity and me ; yet then, again, when I look into that angel face of yours, Edith, where nothing less true or less pure than Heaven seems to be reflected, every doubt vanishes like a summer cloud ; all creation is once more as fresh as at its dawn for me, and I am again back in that green Eden of happiness, which, like the primeval one given to Adam, is never but *once* given to any of his descendants."

"Naughty boy!" said Edith, putting back his hair off his forehead with both her hands ; "and don't you know that in no authentic Eden was there ever more than *one* man. What, then, are all the dukes on earth *beyond* it, to me ?"

Again Lancaster had seized, and was passionately kissing her hands, when the door opened, and the Duchess returned. At the sight of this *tableau*, without advancing any farther, she pointed to the still kneeling Harold, and said—

"Edith, I think it right to tell you that that man, for whom you are so ready to sacrifice every worldly advantage, has practised upon you a gross deception."

Edith, doubting if she had heard aright, looked with a flushed cheek and a flashing eye from the speaker to her lover, who, upon the duchess's entrance, had started to his feet.

"Madam," gasped she, "pardon me ; but I *could* not believe it if you swore it." And with her small, trembling hand she convulsively grasped Lancaster's shoulder, thereby pantomimically asserting that the whole world might accuse him, yet *she* would cling to him.

"I don't think," resumed the Duchess calmly, "that he will

even attempt to deny the fully substantiated charges I shall bring against him."

Lancaster hung his head, but only to gaze more intently into Edith's face, who stood, as she clung to him, like a deer at bay; her bosom heaving, her fine head proudly turned half in profile towards his accuser, and her eyes at once dilating and coruscating like meteors in a summer's night storm.

"In the first place," continued the Duchess, "he told you his income was three hundred a-year; and *that* is false: let him deny it if he can."

Lancaster remained silent.

"In the next place, he said that he counted upon the good offices of his kinsman the Duke of Liddesdale to enable him to marry you; and *that* was false."

"Then, madam," broke in Edith, "if, *indeed*, he has so basely deceived me; which still, notwithstanding the roundness of *your* assertions, and—and—*his* strange provoking silence, I *cannot* believe; why—why—did *you* join in the fraud, knowing it (as you must have done) to be such?"

"Why did I join in it, my dear Edith?" replied the Duchess, advancing and laying her hand upon Lancaster's other shoulder, "because, like a foolish mother as I am, or, as they more comprehensively phrase it in England, like '*such an odd person!*' as I am, I had not the heart to mar my son's romance."

"Who, and what on earth, then, are *you*?" cried Edith, relaxing her grasp of Lancaster, and starting back in unaffected consternation.

"Who is he?—Why my own dear Liddesdale, about whom I have so often talked you deaf; while you were so full of that simulacrum, Harold Lancaster, that instead of learning *my* son's perfections by heart, as you ought to have done, you, I dare say, ignore from the greatest to the least of them. However, as I before said, I really had not the heart to spoil my dear boy's romance, however Quixotic it might be."

"Oh, no ! not a romance, my own Edith," cried her lover, encircling her waist with his arm and drawing her to the sofa, where his mother seated herself also :—"not a romance, but a true *history* of the truest affection, and the deepest and most devoted love that one human being ever felt for another. I loved you, Edith, from the first transient glimpse I caught of you, five years ago ; when one day, upon getting out of the carriage, on the *Place Vendôme*, you dropped your glove, and I picked it up, and gave it to you. I found out from the people of the hotel who you were. I, unknown to you, followed you to Scotland, and there learnt the tragedy that greeted your return home ; and, hearing of the melancholy sale of Glenfern, I sent Tuffnell to buy it in at any price, determined that *your home* it should still be, whether you ultimately consented to share it with me or not. And now, Edith ! dear Edith ! pardon, a full pardon, for all my deceptions ! But from the age of sixteen my horror and fear of being married for my dukedom has amounted almost to monomania, and my dear, good mother there most fully participated in this fear ; and therefore, whatever she may now choose to say to the contrary, entered most cordially into my plot, her *amie d'enfance*, the Duchess of Diplomat being also let into it from necessity ; but there the *dramatis personæ* ended. For four years you know you shut yourself up and gave way to your grief. I loved you the better for it ; for it was really like finding living waters in the desert, to find, in the nineteenth century, a young lady with a heart ! still more, such a young lady, and with such a heart ! I could not, of course, obtrude upon your sorrow, nor would I have done so if I could ; for I thought—and not without reason—that suddenly as my love for you had been implanted in my heart, the longer it there germinated in secret, the more deeply was it likely to take root ; and when you began to mix in society, and I never lost sight of you, I then did not think it right to impede your career by a precipitate declaration. Moreover, every one declared Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars to be your favoured

suitor; his name had already been re-echoed through the world to the amount of what some people call fame; while even my dukedom was as yet, as far as worldly sensation went, *nil*;—and few women are insensible to fame. All this was torture to me; but still I had no right, and still less inclination, to control your choice, my great ambition being to be loved for myself alone: and I need not tell you the delirium of joy that I was seized with, when, at length, all my torments were more than counterbalanced by your telling that you *did* love me, and *me only*—a poor, penniless, struggling man, as you thought. And, oh! when you tried to persuade me to take orders, and wished for a quiet village life, that we might be the more indissolubly linked together, I could not *then* explain to you, that every moment *you* were more and more unfitting me for the vocation, by converting me into an idolater! which is not exactly the fitting stuff wherewith to make a Christian minister. Still, with the Sybarite epicureanism of love, I wished to prolong the term of this *ingano felice*, that I might go on convincing myself that it was *I* that was loved, the poor Harold Lancaster, and not the rich Duke of Liddesdale; and, though now tolerably certain of this fact, so delightful was the probation, that I verily believe I should have carried it on six months longer, had not that good woman there, insisted that she would no longer be (to use her own phrase) kept out of her son. So, having promised to dine with her Grace to-day to meet you, I was at last obliged, love, to appear in *propria persona*."

As he ceased speaking, his mother, pointing to Edith, burst into a silvery laugh. "I'd give the world, child," cried she, "that I could get a picture of you at this moment, for it would be perfectly unique! as I don't believe there is another young lady in Europe, certainly not in London, who would look so ludicrously blank, and actually disappointed! at her *poor nobody* of a lover turning out to be a rich duke."

"Well," said Edith—with that look of physical exhaustion which great mental excitement always occasions, as her eyes

filled with tears, and she held out one hand to the mother, and the other to the son, but looked up earnestly and almost sadly into the face of the latter—"I suppose it is very foolish of me, but I have loved you so deeply, so lavishly, as Harold Lancaster, that I almost feel as if I could not love you as well by any other name."

"Try, mine own! We don't know what we can do till we try," said her lover, kissing a whisper into her ear.

"At all events, I hope Harold is one of your names?" said she.

"Not only Harold, but Lancaster also; they are both Christian names of mine."

"And having so many Christian names," put in his mother, "I wished him also to have some corresponding Christian virtues; for as I before said, you know I am what is called in England, 'such an odd person!' which comprehensive term includes every deviation from the beaten track, from morality down to melancholy; and accordingly one of my oddities consisted in having a horror of the early vice—total want of feeling and principle, and sordid worldliness—imbibed by boys at our public schools and colleges, and therefore, I resolved to save my son from this contaminating ordeal, as I did not want him to get on in the world, as it is called. I only wanted him to go well through it, as the high, but very miry road to a better one; and so far from wishing to mulct the psychological and higher portion of his nature, by the English tariff of studiously suppressing all evidence of feeling, I, on the contrary, wished every good feeling to be strenuously cultivated; and although never ostentatiously displayed, yet always fearlessly and frankly so. I wished him, in short, to live, not so much taking heed what men should say of him, as of how GOD WOULD JUDGE HIM. For, as an eloquent and profound writer* truly observes,

* "The reciprocal influences of body and mind," by W. Newnham, Esq., M.R.S. L., London. J. Hatchard and Son, Piccadilly 1852.

"the object of mental development may be defined to be the closest attainable approximation to the perfection of an ignorant creature, which necessitates the zealous pursuit of intellectual acquisition; and also to the perfection of a dependent creature, dependent upon others, during the first years of his existence, dependent upon the body for the manifestations of his higher faculties, and dependent upon the Almighty Giver of all good for his moral principles and virtue, and for the sanctions by which they are enforced. It is of great importance to watch the combined agency of these elements of mental character; to trace the gradual recession of the instinctive night of infancy, as the day of reason dawns, and unfolds to our notice the several faculties of the spiritual mind; to distribute and associate these according to a classification which shall facilitate our acquaintance with human nature, and then to hail the rising of that sun of perception, whose reflected beams can alone enable us to explore the nature and habits of the individual, his peculiar manifestations, his intellectual aptitudes, his moral principles, his religious duties and obligations; and let it never be forgotten, that not only will the meridian of life be characterized by these early efforts, but that the evening of our days will close in gloom, or it will exhibit the mellowed tints of a departing summer's day, together with that peaceful and unruffled calm which can arise only from the hushing and repose of the elemental storms of passion; while this organ must depend upon the powerful agency of a controlling freedom of will, guided, governed, subdued, originated even by the soft whisper of *religious truth*. Thus then it will be seen that intellectual culture alone will be insufficient to form the character, in all its length, and breadth, and strength, and depth of manifestation; for man does not live in a world of intellect; his time is not to be exclusively devoted to the luxury of thinking, and to receiving or communicating the stores of genius. Far otherwise! He is virtually placed on earth as a *social* being; he has relative duties to perform. His talents have been conferred upon him, not merely as a source of

selfish enjoyment, but as the means and instruments of usefulness, and of happiness to others. For the use he makes of these talents he is deeply responsible, and he is placed in such a scene of trial and probation, as that moral good or evil will assuredly result from their cultivation, their neglect or their abuse. It is not permitted to him to rest satisfied with any measure of intellectual attainment, social good, relative duty, gentlemanlike feeling, or moral influence, while there remains an attainable point in advance, upon any one, or upon all of these routes; while there can yet be found on earth *one* individual to instruct, to comfort, to protect, to please, or to improve; or while there exists virtue to love and to esteem—a God to serve and to obey—or a future state of rewards and punishments. Convinced, too, as I am, that the *heart* is the root of the head, and should, therefore, above and before all things, be duly watched and irrigated with those diviner dews which have descended to us direct from Heaven, if we would have the latter put forth any good fruit; I was anxious that my son should cultivate ‘the fair humanities of old religion’ first, and the brilliant heathenism of the classics afterwards; for in the capital of the firm, straight shaft, they are an ornament; but as the *foundation* of the edifice, they become a foul, dry rot.

“Moreover, I wished him to acquire general information upon all useful and current subjects, instead of being firmly grounded in universal ignorance, as is the case in our English systems of education. So much for my labours in the quarry; but when vigorously hewn, and symmetrically moulded, this mortal image, made after the model of THE IMMORTAL! had to be polished; for not only is *manner* totally neglected with us, but that which is of equal importance, *tact*; for tact is to manner, what *time* is to music—namely, that which makes or mars all its harmony; and the clumsy excuse so often resorted to of—‘I said or did so quite unintentionally, and without thinking,’ rather aggravates than allays the original irritation, as we none of us like to be told in so many words, that our feelings are a

matter of such total indifference to any individual, that it is quite a chance whether they wound them or not; and to be very good in the main, but monstrously disagreeable in manner, is a sort-of defacing of God's coin, that deserves severe reprobation. Fish, flesh, and fowl are very nutritious food, and would be equally so if taken raw; only, in that form they would be very revolting to all civilized palates. And now, dear Edith, there sits *the* great work of my life. I give him to you freely, gladly; and in so doing to *you* I can offer no higher praise: and it is not for *me* to eulogise my own achievements, but I hope *you* will do so in the most comprehensive and satisfactory of all ways, by telling me this day ten years that you think, nay, that you are *sure* that I have succeeded in the great work I undertook."

Edith's only reply was to throw her arms round her mother's neck; for such she felt she really was; and as her head rested on that faithful bosom, shedding tears of deep happiness, the little *Sèvres* china *pendule* on the mantelpiece chimed the hour of eight, and before it had finished striking, dinner was announced, and this intensely happy trio descended to the dining-room.

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION XVI.

"Ye have need of patience."—*Heb. x. 36.*

"What is a jewel, if it be not set
Forth by a ring or some rich carcanet?
But being so, then the beholders cry—
See, see, a gem as rare as Bælus' eye;
Then public praise does run upon the stone,
For a most rich, a rare, a precious one;
Expose your jewels, then, unto the view,
That we may praise them, or themselves prize you;
Virtue conceal'd, with Horace you'll confess,
Differs not much from drowsy slothfulness."

Herrick to Mildmay, Earl of Westmoreland.

"Multo putans, fortemque animo miseratus iniquam."

It was astonishing!—or rather it was not at all astonishing—what a run the Liddesdale romance had, (as the loves of Edith and Lancaster were called,) among the *élite* of Diplomat House, and the far west; a *run*, sufficient to have caused from jealousy another "Battle of The Books" in "The Row" and "Dean's Yard," had any spirit been *Swift* enough to have declared war against this usurpation of reality on the territories of romance. But alas! if ghosts are *sure*, they are also slow; so not even a dis-sentient shadow being raised against them, the young duke and his beautiful *fiancée* remained in possession of the field, so widely *different*, in one respect, from the famous Boyle and Bentley feud about the genuineness of the Epistles of Phalaris, and the Fables of *Æsop*—inasmuch as that nobody disputed the genu-

iness of the Liddesdale title; yet *like* it, on another account, namely, that his romance, and himself, were received—not exactly in the literary but in the fashionable world—“*with a tempest of applause*,” and “wits, wittings, poets, mathematicians, and antiquaries,” or at least antiquities (*vulgo* dowagers,) concurred in celebrating his triumph! The latter, who had warned their daughters, nieces, and *chaperonnées* against Harold Lancaster, times and oft, as the penniless scion and hanger-on of a noble family; and the daughters, nieces, and *chaperonnées* who had always been engaged six deep when he had presumed to ask them to dance, now had but *ONE* spontaneous reminiscence of what a *delightful*! young man *they* had *always* thought him; and the young ladies more especially—in defiance of all maidenly modesty and their former coldness—went so far as to openly declare, that on *this* side Elysium at least, whatever there might be on the other, there were no such whiskers as the Duke of Liddesdale’s; and even Archdeacon Panmuir made one grand solitary effort of memory, and recollected (which nobody else could assist him in, or give him the slightest clue towards doing) how much he had always liked and *encouraged* Mrs. Lancaster; while Mrs. Dunbar, when the romance was read to her by Edith, said, with a very innocent and pardonable little chuckle,—

“Well, my dear, didn’t I *always* tell you from the first night that I saw him at the play—and that he was so kind and attentive to me—what a nice young man he was! Eh, well, deary me! deary me! and to think that we shall all be at dear old Glenfern again! I knew good would come of it when he picked up your glove, it was so like poor Lovat and my rosebud. I don’t know why I did not marry him,” continued the poor old lady, wandering back into, and losing herself amid the dim twilight of the far past; “did I refuse him, or did he ask me? or was it because Aleiphron Murray could not marry poor Mary? And then the wind always howled so mournfully round that eastern turret; and Donald is a naughty bairn, for

he does nothing but steal my letters to make tails for his kite; and I tell him some day it will fly away with him, and then we shall all be in Heaven together; therefore, Samuel Panmuir need not say we shan't, for I know we shall: so, Bridget, put me out my pansy-coloured padusay, for the ball—and——”

But here the old lady's murmuring became inarticulate, and her head having fallen to the side of her easy chair, she was soon in a calm but profound sleep, while Edith sat beside her, and watched.

Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, who had always hated the Duke of Liddesdale, now rejoiced that he had not expressed that hatred too loudly, though it was by no means abated, but quite the reverse. While Mr. Benaraby, on the contrary, rejoiced that he had always said how handsome he thought him; and only wished now, that he had cultivated him more assiduously. Indeed in his present state of political nullity, he was at a loss to cultivate something, but was undecided whether that something should be a ground plot, or a government plot; but most probably the former, as he had simultaneously acquired a small landed property, and lost his office. At times, too, his thoughts loomed into the arena of literature, that Tusculum in which most disappointed politicians enjoy (?) the *otium cum dignitate* of—an inevitable necessity. There, too, it was easier to astonish the natives, by making such a plunge either into the streams of Castaly, or the Slough of Despond, as *must* splash up a sensation! and had there not been a splendid discovery, or rather recovery of the Digamma, lost out of the Greek alphabet for more than two thousand years, what if he were to come out strong, with the miraculous discovery of the *real* origin of the Dove being the armorial symbol of Babylon, discovered under a gold mask, found upon the face of a skeleton at Nineveh, and forwarded to him by his “*own Excavator!*” or as this was a decidedly biblical age, perhaps the pretended discovery of some lost Hebrew point, throwing a new light upon the whole of the Apocrypha, might be better. True there were some very pro-

found Hebrew scholars; well, and if there were, what of that? for one Chatterton in the legion of pretenders who is knocked down at a blow, there are fifty McPhersons set up by a puff! At all events, throughout Europe it would cause a theological and literary controversy, of which he, Issachar Benaraby! would be the nucleus; and the more untenable his assertions were, the more vigorously would he maintain them; and if at any time somewhat too hard pressed by some heavy brigade of *facts*, he could always gallantly lead the forlorn hope of his "own Excavator." "Besides," added the Right Honourable gentleman, taking down a volume of "The Encyclopædia Britannica," and carelessly turning over its ponderous leaves—for this conference with himself had taken place in his library—"it would look uncommonly GRAND! in some future Encyclopædia—'letter B,' anno Domini, 1854—to read that 'About this time, all Europe was thrown into the greatest state of excitement, by what was at that period denominated *The great Benarabian Hebrew Point Controversy!* having originated in the pretended or real discovery (for such, some still incline to think it) of a long lost Hebrew point, throwing an entirely new light upon the Apocrypha, which was asserted to have been found by the Right Hon. Issachar Benaraby, Chancellor of the Exchequer to Queen Victoria, during the Redby Administration; and learnedly and ably maintained by that gentleman, against all the *savans* of the day, for a period extending over more than four years,'—'for a period extending over more than four years,'" repeated that gentleman, reading over this imaginary article in an unspawned Encyclopædia; after which he added, "and the deuce is in it! if I am not back in office by *that* time, and this will serve to keep me before the public *ad interim*;—yes, the *point* is the thing." And so saying, he drew out the tails of his coat, seated himself in a library chair, and dipped his pen into the ink; and as he was now *coming to the point* (considering how seldom he did so) we will leave him to pursue his studies unmolestedly—as gulling the public is, at all events, always one

great point gained, either as a *littérateur*, a philanthropist, or a politician. One thing was however certain, namely, that as far as its originator was concerned, "THE GREAT BENARABIAN HEBREW POINT CONTROVERSY would be far more polemical, than antiquarian or logical; for invective was the right honourable gentleman's inspiration, and hot water his element; and yet he took no leaf out of Prosper Calenius' *De Atrâ Bile*, neither did he in his present undertaking indeed, as Aristotle and Ptolemy had done, the one on his Natural History, and the other on his *Almagest*—to spend *unius regni pretium*!—on the contrary, he *sincerely* intended to reap a king's ransom by it; and this anticipation was by no means so extravagant, seeing how much cheaper and better Kings are now-a-days than they used to be: so leaving Mr. Benaraby amongst those—

"Who sleep in pyramdic pride,"

stirring them up with a long bow! in default of a long pole; which latter, as a man who had had so many contested elections, he very naturally dreaded—we will, dear reader, if you have nothing better to do, take a stroll down Regent Street, that charming *locale*, which foreigners, with thick beards, and perceptions to match, religiously believe, as an article of faith, ranks in English fashion where they have so generously, for centuries, ranked the Lord Mayor in English aristocracy, namely: at *le cime de la sommité*.

The day was fine, the heavens blue, the sun bright, the hour four P. M., and all Babylon was astir, either on wheels, on foot, or on feet—that is, walking, driving, or riding—when an extremely *récherché*, well-appointed cane *char-à-banc* sort of open carriage, with thorough-bred horses, and the servants in mourning, drew up at a ladies' shoemaker's. In this carriage were two ladies and two little girls; one lady and the two children in mourning also, and the other not. The carriage was Lady Moncton's, our old acquaintance, Mrs. Piers Moncton; for her husband's elder brother, Grantley, and his father, old Sir

Piers, were now both dead. "To be sure" (as the present Lady Moncton had said, upon hearing the longed-for tidings), "the man might have died at some more convenient epoch, than just at the very beginning of the season, to cram one into black at such a time; but, then, what else could one expect from a father or mother-in-law, but that, for consistency sake, even their last act would be something to annoy one." The little girls were Lady Moncton's two daughters, Caroline and Mildred, and the other lady, not in mourning, further than her hair and complexion, was their governess, Fraulein Göthe Kant. Children, of course, are always wanting shoes; but poor little Caroline had, somehow or other, more particularly put her foot in it, to judge from the upbraidings she was enduring from Fraulein; or it might be, that from the long habit the latter had had of vituperating the red-haired Iris of the Edgware Road, CORRY! command! and condemnation! were "familiar as household words" to her, and therefore a great relief to her to utter, when she had any feelings, or, their synonyme, tempers, to vent. So, having, on the present occasion, made Regent Street ring with the reiterated scream of CORRY! in alto, till some sympathising itinerant Irish echo actually seemed to reply the word SORRY, as the little girl evidently was, the governess sank back exhausted, winding up, however, with this assertion:

"Oh, CORRY! you are von rascal child! for you vill do nussings vidout de battle pitch."

Meanwhile, Lady Moncton—who had been told by Soto Mayor, and some others, that the devil no longer, but angels, should be painted black, *she* looked so charmingly in her sables!—was in high good humour (notwithstanding CORRY's "rascality"), as, indeed, people generally are, when they have got all they want. And, verily, this big round world of ours is girdled by a plantation of "green bay trees" of the ungodly flourishing! "And, lo! I have often returned, and yet never knew I the time that I saw them not."

The shop, before which Lady Moncton's carriage had stop-

ped, was not large, but its window was well filled with all sorts of dainty little satin shoes, and kid and velvet boots; looking as if, even had the feet for which they were destined been in them, nothing so fairy-like could have broken the narrow planks of plate-glass, on which their arched insteps rested; and over this shop-door, in gold letters, might be read: "MAURICE ROBERTS, LADIES' BOOT AND SHOE MAKER."

"Will you have the goodness, Fraulein," said Lady Moncton, "to take Carry to see about her black satin boots, and I'll call for you, in about a quarter of an hour; but I must go back to Madame Devey's, for I quite forgot to tell her that I wished my stays to be made of white *moire antique*, and not the common *moire*. Mildred, you can come with me, as she has your black *crêpe lisse* frock to try."

Poor CARRY quite shuddered when she found herself thus given up a solitary hostage into the hands of the Philistines; for, sooth to say, Fraulein's temper, never one of the sweetest, had shared the fate of cream under the influence of thunder, at going from publisher to publisher, and finding that herself, and her MSS., though at first not only favourably received, and her propositions entertained almost with alacrity, yet, as in the instance of Messieurs Hum and Balderdash, were, invariably, from some mysterious counter influence, doomed, eventually, to meet with disappointment: and these repeated abortive attempts to gain an independence by the most legitimate of all means, namely, her own talents and exertions—when those talents and exertions had proved sufficient to swell the reputation of one of the magnates of English literature—began to tell, not only upon her temper, but upon her health. That most charming of writers, Izaak D'Israeli, speaking in his "Calamities of Authors," of the ill-fated Collins, accounts for his fickleness and inactivity as "the vacillations of a mind broken and confounded." Alas! how many minds are there broken and confounded under the Juggernaut wheels of oppression! and *suppression* whose mutilated tortures only serve to level, and

macadamize, the world's high road for their tyrants, and are trampled into still further dust by the unthinking mass who swell the triumph of those tyrants !

"Dere ! CORRY, you are always stopping up de way, and preventing de peoples to pass !" said Fraulein, giving the little girl, who had not yet even alighted from the carriage, a no very gentle push, by way of impetus, and paying her this anticipatory compliment of treating her as a public nuisance. Though when they did get out, Roberts's shop being next door to a music-seller's, Fraulein herself became a fixture before the window of the latter, humming over every bar of the different songs exposed for sale, and accompanying herself pantomimically upon the brass bar that protected the shop window ; so that *she*, in reality, was now doing what she had so prematurely accused poor Caroline of doing : that is, blocking up the way ; only that Englishmen are too sensible, and have too much businesslike perseverance, to mind little impediments ; so they continued to push on and tumble over her, merely crying out, as they did so—

"Why the d——! ! can't you move out of the way ?"

But as she had now got completely into the inebriated seesawing of the "*Brindisi*," we shall leave her (as it takes some little time to recover from an orgie), and penetrate into another "*segretto*," by entering Roberts's shop without her. The group therein assembled consisted of Roberts, and his wife (the latter so transformed by a black silk gown and white blonde cap, as to be scarcely recognisable), and their son Joe ; who, with a very excited manner, was what the sailors call "spinning a long yarn," with an open letter in his hand. His costume had also undergone a considerable change, for he was in his Sunday's clothes, and had a dark blue coat with gilt buttons, considerably too short in the waist and sleeves, trousers of the same, which barely reached to his ankles apparently afraid of going farther and faring worse, as it is always muddy in the Borough ; his waistcoat was of kerseymere, with a yellow ground and a

flowing pattern of red brown leaves over it; his shirt collar, which was of considerable height, and the very triumph of starch! rose all round his neck like a rampart; and his white Scotch cambric cravat had such very long ends and such tremendous bows, that it looked for all the world like a flag, either of truce or victory, flying from the aforesaid rampart; his hair was brushed up into a sort of switch tail in front; and his hat, which had a very narrow rim, and was rather the worse for wear, came on impartially all round his head, and doubled down the tops of his ears like an avalanche in its descent; a crimson watch-ribbon with one large seal and a perforated sixpence dangled from his fob; and he also sported a pair of thick leather dark green gloves, with such enormous digital superfluities, that his own fingers had no chance of ever getting to the end of them. In short, like those of all common people, *endimanché*, or Sundayfied, his clothes stood out from him at a respectful distance, as if they and the wearer were mutually afraid of soiling each other. The letter he held in his hand was from Union Jack, who had got a fellow convict to act as his amanuensis, and was written from on board "The Catch 'em alive," then lying off Southampton, and about to sail for Sydney. But the group assembled in Roberts's shop did not end with his wife, his son and himself; there was another person, almost hidden, it is true, under a bale of black crape and parametta, perched upon a high shop chair, sobbing violently at the perusal of Jack's letter; while, half for sorrow and half for support, her head leaned against the shop window, and her arm rested on the counter, so that altogether, she appeared quite knocked down; but whether the assault had been committed by some cowardly feather, or by a strong husbandly-looking thong of leather which lay on the counter beside her, is among those innumerable things which may be surmised, but never can be clearly elucidated; all that is certain was, that the owner of this prostrate form was Mrs. Bousefield.

"You see," said Joe Roberts, addressing his three auditors col-

lectively, as he gave a violent slap with the back of his right hand to Jack's letter, which he held in his left, "the boy aint wishus at heart; but take a cherrybum, if so be as you could catch one, and send him, for nothink at all, fust to one prison and then to another, amongst the scum of the hearth, and the wishusest of the wishus; and you jist see, for all he only had a head and wings from Heaven ven he vent into prison, if he would not have enough to sit down upon among the biggest-devils for the rest of his life when he comed out! that's all. Poor feller! poor feller!" continued Joe, hastily dashing the big tears with the back of his hand from his eyes, his father silently wiping his with the corner of his apron, and his mother fast making a watered silk of her plain *gros de Naples*, while Mrs. Bousefield continued to dilute *her* spirits in a way that she had never been guilty of doing while at "The Fox and Fiddle."

"Poor feller!" repeated Joe; "he says as he's determined to make his fortin out there, and become a spectable karacter—in course he'll be spectable enough, if so be as he makes a fortin; and then, we must all on us go out to him. For my part, I don't care how soon, to-day afore to-morrer, for that matter; provided as I could jist see that 'ere precious rascal, Ponsonby Ferrars, git one good ducking in a horse-pond afore I started."

Here Mrs. Bousefield continued to ejaculate, with great energy and precipitation, the fifteenth letter of the alphabet, O! O! O! O!—after which vocal exertion, like "Humpty Dumpty" who "sat on the wall," she also had "a great fall;" but it was into Joe Roberts's arms, who had stepped forward to prevent the floor from becoming, like a neglected garden, all strewed with weeds. The fact was, like a sensible woman as she was, she had been considering that Bousefields, like barnacles, are not to be caught every day; and that although there certainly was a great bathos in descending from a butler to an ostler! yet that Joe, now that she saw him "*tidied up*," was by no means a bad-looking man; there was even great capabilities about his whiskers, if properly taken in hand; it was pity he was lame, to

be sure, but then, lawr ! the men now-a-days had such lame excuses about not marrying, that it was better to have even a lame apology for a husband than no husband at all. Besides, now that it had turned out that old Roberts's patron was no less a personage than the Duke of Liddesdale, who knew, but if *she* married Joe, with *her manners* ! and knowledge of high life ! gleaned second-hand from poor dear Mr. Bousefield's matriculation at the Dowager Countess of Coddlecat's ; and seeing that she, Mrs. Bousefield, was altogether a *bettermost sort of person*, but what his grace might also set *them* up in business, and so the splendours of some autumnal "Fox and Fiddle" might equal, if not eclipse, those of its early spring ! and behind the bar, and *riding* with her in the *chay* of a Sunday, nobody need ever know that Joe was lame. All this, and a great deal more, had been transmitted by mental electric telegraph from Mrs. Bousefield's imagination to her determination. And, moreover, Joe at the commencement of the present interview having expressed his repugnant inability ever to resume his former avocations at "The Tabard," in which poor Union Jack had shared for so many years, Mrs. Bousefield, as an "*hexperienced ooman*," knew that there is nothing like propinquity for bringing all matrimonial machinations to a happy issue, determined forthwith to place him on the supernumerary list at Magnolia Lodge ; for, from poor Florence's now rapidly declining health, there had for some months been a regency, and Mrs. Bousefield had been invested with absolute power ; and now she became suddenly horrified at the manner in which "them brats of boys destroyed the knives and shoes, to be sure ! whereas, a steady, tidy man's wages might be saved out of their breakage and destruction alone ; and £20 for one year, even if she should ultimately have to pay it out of her own pocket, was not dear, at the present high prices and scarcity of the market, for a second husband—*thof*, in her *widdered art*, poor dear Mr. Bousefield must still, and ever, be her *Sunday's best* ! "

No wonder, then, that Mrs. Bousefield pitched and tossed,

like a ship in a storm, with agitation, as all these conflicting thoughts and fortifications were being thrown up in her mind ; but the cause (as is so often the case), ignoring that he *was* the cause of them, kept rubbing down her arm with an accompanying *iss, iss, iss!* to the great detriment of the

“Plentiful crape that encumbered her cloak,
And bow’d down its beautiful hood!”

“There! there! marm, *don’t* you take on so, pray; or I shall have to get the bolting iron to you,” said Joe, jerking her with a heave back into her chair, as he might have jerked a sack of corn into a hayloft.”

“Oh! Mr. Roberts, sir!”

Now, in his whole life, Joe had never before been accosted with the pomp and state of Mr. Roberts! let alone this rouging the rose, and gilding the gold, by tacking *sir!* to it; and accordingly he felt his dignity as a man suddenly scaling and grappling with the stupendous heights of social grandeur! which the widow had opened to his view; and as half the great events in this world *do* “arise from trivial things,” if ever she became Mrs. Joe Roberts, it was *that Mr. Roberts* that did it.

“Oh! Mr. Roberts, sir!” resumed Mrs. Bousefield; “when you talk of that poor dear *prosecuted* * Jack, you may suppose what my feelings is, has the mother of six dear infants, that never give me one moment’s *oneasiness!*”

And here Mrs. Bousefield started off into another hysteric, as thinking of poor Jack, now on the wide world of waters, made her naturally more at sea than ever about her own six dear *infants!*

“Vell, surely,” sympathized Joe, not very well knowing what particular species of consolation to administer as a panacea for this “fell swoop,” and pulling his right ear with his disengaged hand, as a sort of call-bell for help, “six to one *is* a great hodds, and no mistake, marm.”

* Mrs. Bousefield was not far out this time.

"Oh, has for mistakes, Mr. Roberts, the most *experenced* ooman may be hout hin her reckoning sometimes, but the feelings his always the same, whatever comes hof it; but I'm not one to dwell hupon my *hown* sorrers, very different from *that* when there his so many hof hother people's to repose with a broken hand a contrite 'art upon; hand I've been thinking, Mr. Roberts, has you don't wish to return to 'The Tabard,' which I can quite hunderstand, for hit would be *similar the same* to my returning to *Oborn*, to 'The Fox and Fiddle,' hand finding nothink but a pack of hempty barrels and bottles, or *praps* hanother ooman, with hanother '*usban*!' hand hevery *hindevidjel* thing to '*arrow* hup one's feelings has a wife hand widder. Oh, dear! yes, I quite henter hinto your feelins in respect hof 'The Tabard,' hand, therefore, I was a thinking, Mr. Roberts, that a sittiwation hin private life like, hin a quiet *famly*, might suit you; where wages was not so much a hobject as aving hof your time perfectly to yourself, with nobody to horder you about, and where hall the bells his hanswered by the maids, hand hall the *harrends* done by a boy; now, hif such a place would be to your liking, sir (!) I can honly say has you've no hoccasion to look hin *The Times* noosepaper for it, for sich a one is quite hat your service hat *Magnolier Lodge*; hit's hall in a very umble way to be sure,—no carriages, no liveries, no powder, no plate—hexcept just the commonest necessities, such has spoons, forks, a salver or two, hand a few candlesticks; but nothink, I mean, of what poor dear Mr. Bousefield hand I have halways been haccustomed to. But still, *my* lady his has good a lady has hever was, hand hadn't *orght* to be in that ere pokey way neither, I can tell you, honly that there his quite has many *blackguards*, I call 'em, hif not more, I'm sorry to say, truly sorry to say it, to be found hin high life has in low,—such has honly marries a ooman to break their 'arts, hand their haint no *pleecemen*, nor *magistrates*, nor nothing, for to pull *them* hup for their doings; hand has I said before, I'm truly sorry for it, for poor dear Mr. Bousefield and I having halways been brought

hup hamong the harrystocracy, hand, therefore, feeling in a manner one on 'em, from aving halways lived in the best of sittiutions, hits a grievous thing, I call hit, when one can't look hup to them, hand his forced to hown that there *his* blackguards amongst 'em. But in respect hof this here sittiuation hat Magnolier Lodge, you may *bleeve me*, Mr. Roberts, you'll find nothink to do but what I shall be very willing to 'elp you hin; and many hands, as the saying is, makes light work, and two people with one *'art* makes a quiet ouse; hand has for splendour, hit haint halways 'appiness. Better his a dinner hof herbs where love his (not that I'm partial to wegetables myself) than a stalled hox with contention. Hand a virtuous ooman is a crownd to her *'usban*, which hit as halways been considered so, hand hif hever you *should git* married, Mr. Roberts, it is my sincere wish has you may not never be put hof with *half a crownd*—that his, with han hindifferent wife, hand *that's* the worst hof *my* wishes to you; though, 'what his man, or the son of man, that *I* should have respect hunto him? for man his houn to sorer, has the sparks flies hupwads,' hand when he's hout of breath there's a hend on him!"

Luckily this was not the case with Mrs. Bousefield herself, who, though completely out of breath for the time being, yet was in full vigour in other respects, though the turning out of her rag-bag of biblical misquotations, was always an arduous undertaking, both for herself and her auditors: for just as threads and tapes, hooks and eyes, buttons and bodkins, shreds of silk and patches of cotton, struggled for precedence in her work-bag, so did light literature, love, conjugal affection, and sacred and profane history, dispute the supremacy in her closely-packed mind; and the Archbishop Peckham was not yet born, who could have set in order the logical and grammatical *nugæ* of either of the two latter.

Joe (to use his own expression), at this brilliant harangue, felt for all the world as if he had been fired! and though there was nothing like Troy about *him*, and still less anything like Helen

about Mrs. Bousefield, yet this was precisely the state of things she had been aiming at. However, as all that he *clearly* understood in her oration, was the offer of a comfortable sinecure at Magnolia Lodge, he resolved to close with that tangible portion of her discourse, and therefore said—

“Well, I’m sure, marm, I’m perticklar obleeged to yer, and what may the wages be?”

“Lawr, my poor ’ead, didn’t I mention? But I’m *that* nervous, hand *that* low, that I don’t know from one minute to hanother the hups hand downs hof hanythink. £20 a-year his the wages; but has I said before, Mr. Roberts, hit is one hof them sittiwations has one sees sometimes in the noosepapers, but seldom hin real life, where wages is not so much a hobject has bein’ treated has one hof the family!”

And here, Mrs. Bousefield cast at Joe such a look of overwhelming domesticity, as must have made any man less accustomed to horses, and more so to the society of the *softer* (?) sex than Joe was, feel quite at home; but scorning to take advantage of a “hunpertected widder ooman” (as Mrs. Bousefield persisted in calling herself); by retaliating with a corresponding look, Joe took his hat off the counter, and looking down steadily into that, as if he had been gazing into a well in search of truth, said—

“Well, marm, that ere is, wery fair wages, perticklar as you say as there haint nothink to do.”

“Oh, has for there not being *nothink* to do, Hengland halways hexpects hevry man to do his dooty! hin that state hof life hinto which hit pleases God to call him, hand *my* plan for getting through the world his to love one hanother and howe no man hany think, ‘for the Lord forsaketh not his saints,’ hand I ‘ave halways ‘ad ‘good-will towards men.’ But ‘a brother his born for adversity,’—therefore ham I truly thankful, that I never ‘ad no brother, though a poor, lone, unpertected widder ooman.”

And to show how such are “*put upon*,” even by the reptile world, a huge blue bottle now lit upon Mrs. Bousefield’s nose;

but having been very roughly ejected from thence by her voluminous pocket handkerchief, it took the mean revenge of flapping its wing into the corner of her eye, whereupon she declared, with a slight scream, that as sure has hever her name was Susanner Bousefield, she was blinded for life, and further requested that Joe would have the goodness just to look into her eye, and tell her what he saw there?

Now, Joe never having read "Tristram Shandy," was not only unaware of the perdition that awaited him if he obeyed the widow's orders, but was equally unsuspecting of the malice prepense that lurked in her request; and was just about to be caught in this Venus's fly-trap, when Fraulein Gothebant, with little Caroline Moncton, entered the shop, and saved him from so imminent a peril!

Fraulein, like all who have suffered in any shape themselves, had, to do her justice, some sympathy with the sufferings of others: so seeing the traces of tears upon every face assembled in Roberts's shop, she enquired very kindly what was the matter, for most foreigners would rather at any time be intrusive than *appear* unfeeling; whereas, we Anglo-Saxons, for the most part, would rather at any time be unfeeling than *seem* intrusive, by *mixing ourselves up in other people's affairs, and perhaps getting ourselves into a mess!* What are other people's joys or sorrows to us?—an axiom which, alas! has become such a *practical* nationality, that, notwithstanding the superabundance of *theologies* amongst us, one is led to fear, that in all this religion (!) CHRISTIANITY has perished in attempting to discover the north-west passage round our hearts.

Joe, from having poor Union Jack's history more by heart than any of them, knew better how to condense it, and therefore undertook to be spokesman, merely suppressing Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' name, which he did, on account of a look from his father, who, like all people beginning to get on in the world, was afraid of being too candid, even about his worst enemy, knowing that in the present highly moral (!) state of society, from

the highest rung of the social ladder to the lowest ; it is never the *doers* of evil who excite public indignation, or are accused of violating propriety ; but only those silly asses, their victims, who have the *bad taste* to outrage public opinion, by complaining ; and "*bad taste*," like "*such an odd person !*" includes, in our vocabulary, all imaginable, and unimaginable misdemeanours as yet invented.

"Poor leetle fellows," said Fraulein, wiping her eyes, when she heard Union Jack's history. "It is ver shockings, ver shockings, indeed ; and I do vish *dat* dat bad mans, dat you say vas his faders, and dat gave him dis bad monies, dat first get de poor boy to prisons—I do vish, indeeds, dat he could be vell punish, and sent to Botany Bays, instead of dis poor chiles ; but is dere nussings dat can be dones for him ? because I know a gentlemen who have got de influence vid de governments, and I would speaks to him if you lik."

"Much obleeged to you, marm, I'm sure you're wery good, *wery* ; but you see," said Joe, "poor Jack is done for now, shipped clean out of the country, packed close along with them ere convicts, like a set of Yarmouth bloaters, kind of potted jail-birds, like for the Colonies, where, I s'pose as they're considered rarities, ain't no rarities *here*, nor likely to be so, as long as they goes on making prisons and penitentiaries, the honly *per-paratory* schools for poor folks' children, and the gallows the honly helewated sittiuation as they has to look to poor things."

Here, Joe being frowned to order by his father, added abruptly—"No, marm, I don't see nothink as can be done now *onless* indeed you'd be so good as to get this here gemlen you speaks of to drop a line to the gov'nor out there, and ax him to keep a compassionate eye upon poor Jack, till such time as I can get out there myself to look arter him, vich vont be long I 'ope."

"Yes, yes, I will do *dat*s vis pleasures, only you tell to me again de boy's names and de names of de sheeps he sail in," replied Fraulein, taking out her tablets to make a memorandum

of it ; but finding the name of the vessel quite too much for her orthography she resigned the task to the elder Roberts, who wrote, in a legible hand—

“A boy, bearing the name of Union Jack, aged eleven and a-half, who sailed from Southampton with a batch of convicts, on the 9th of June, 18—, for Sydney, in ‘The Catchemalive,’ Captain Swivel, burden 300 ton.”

Tank you, now de only ting is,” added Fraulein, musingly, “I don’t know ver vell how I can lets you know vot dis gentlemen vill do ; for I fear to find your shops shuts on de Sunday, and dat is de only days dat I have to myselfs, to get outs in de afternoons.”

Mrs. Bousefield, who had with great difficulty remained passive so long, now stepped forward, and making one of her most circular and voluminous curtseys, much resembling that peculiar species gymnastic, which children (that is little girls) call a cheese, said,—

“Hif you’ll *hexcuse* me taking of such a liberty, Mum, but this his honly Thursday, hand by next Sunday, I am ‘appy to say, has Mr. Roberts (here Joe was telegraphed by the widow, not only with her eyes, but by her thumb, which she now hoped soon to have him under) this Mr. Roberts, mum, will be at hour ouse,—Magnolier Lodge, Hold Brompton,—where I shall be most proud and ‘appy, hif you will do me the onor hof coming to make hany communications habout, that poor dear *prosecuted* child ; *praps, um*, you yourself his a mother ? and this dear young lady may be yours ? hif so, I need not tell you what *my* feelings his, has the mother of six dear hinfants, which is hall like a dream, now, as has hever been ;” and at this point the large pocket-handkerchief wiped the tears that were in the same category, and Mrs. Bousefield resumed,—“I’m sure *my* lady, (for I’m honly a servant) would halso be most ‘appy to have the onor hof receiving hof you, mum, honly er ealth is so delicut that she haint heaqual to company hof no kind ; therefore you’ll please to *hexcuse* her, um ; hendeed being halways with

a person bin her state, I find very injurious to my hown ealth, hand hat times, I'm *that* low, hand *that* nervous, that hany one might knock me down with a feather, hand hat them times, hit his, that I feel what it is to be a lone ooman, hand a hunper-
tected widder!"

And here she slammed two such energetic looks into the face of the doomed Joe, that had he been physically jammed between two church doors, he could not have felt more hopelessly transfixed!

Fraulein, though a little mystified, as most persons at first were, by the diffuse and extraneous matter of Mrs. Bousefield's mode of address, gleaned from it quite sufficient to know that she had invited her to go to Brompton on the following Sunday, and exclusive of the good she really wished to do if in her power, she was delighted at the idea of that much of a drive, (even in a closely packed omnibus,) into the country, and therefore gladly accepted the proposition, promising to be there about two o'clock, p. m.

Hearts, like plants, when young are tender, till the sirocco of the world has passed over and seared them, though for some few select natures, (those bright exceptions that *should* be the rule, but are not!) the trying ordeal of this said infected world, is but a moral gymnasium, in which, from constant exercise, the feelings and sympathies, which are the muscular strength of the heart, only become the more fully developed, and the more equal to every increased demand made upon their force, but in childhood, this germ of good is merely green, pliant, and tendril-like, with small powers beyond those of instinct and impulse, and woe! to them who, instead of fostering and training these into a deep-rooted, and systematic luxuriance, warp and stultify them, by irrigating them with the petrifying streams of selfishness and worldly prudence (?)

Little Caroline Moncton's heart, having put forth a spontaneous blossom of compassion for poor Union Jack, from the recital of whose history, the tears were streaming down her little

rosy cheeks, now timidly approached Joe, and slipping half-a-crown into his hand, said,—

“I am very sorry, that this is all I have, but will you send it to the poor boy that you have been telling us about?”

“God bless you! little Miss! that will I; and may you never know the distress to need a friend, let alone the still greater distress of not finding one if you should need it; Lawr! talk of the ’lectric teylographt as a noo inwention!” added Joe, passing the back of his hand hastily across his eyes, “why, bless yer! it’s as old as the world, for the real ’lectric teylographt, which God made ven He made the world, vos vone heart a feeling for another, no matter how far asunder they may be.”

Mrs. Bousefield having considered this truth of Joe’s, as decidedly personal, to herself, immediately telegraphed back a suitable reply, and little Caroline having tried on her black satin boots which had been found to fit admirably, and ordered another pair, Mrs. Bousefield suddenly recollected that she also required another “*pre aboots*,” and requested Joe, “just to be so good as to hunlace those she had hon,” for knowing him to be a judge of horse-flesh, she thought a display of her ankle might not be thrown away upon him; nor was it, for that charmed “*SIR*,” which was still fermenting in Joe’s whole system, and causing him to rise (in his own estimation) like a well-kneaded loaf, had perhaps something to do with his exclamation, as he smoothed down Mrs. Bousefield’s black silk stocking over her ankle after he had removed the boot—

“Well! you be unkimmen clean about the hocks, to be sure, marm?”

It is to be supposed the widow blushed, as at this compliment, she hastily lowered the awning of black crape that projected in front of her bonnet, and at the same moment Lady Moncton returned, and Fraulein and her pupil took their departure, the former again promising to be at Magnolia Lodge on the following Sunday, to report progress about what she had been able to achieve in behalf of poor Jack; and Mrs. Bouse-

field not a little delighted at the idea of receiving a visit from a lady who "rode" in such a carriage! "heven hif she was but a guv'ness, which, poor thing, was not her fault, has nobody would be that could elp it; but then hevery one can't be ladies,"—no, and she might have added, nor even lady's maids! or hack horses—or decidedly no one would be a governess!

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION XVII.

"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace."—*Luke* ii. 29.

"Alas! e'er since mine eye your sight did miss,
My cheerful day is turned to cheerless night;
And oh! my night, of death the shadow is."

Rodolph. "A patent villain this, sirs! with a smoothe
Hypocrite's elastic, snake-like skin,
That he can cast at will;—not so his venom:
That lurks ever 'neath his tongue."

Duke. "Yet even serpents are oft times caught
When they deem their coils the tightest."

Unpublished Old Play.

"Your looks are pale and wild,
And do import some misadventure."

ROUND, round, round rolls the world! And still the Fates round the world roll the motley yarn of human destinies! Always owing a grudge to, and spiting nature whenever they can, by spinning their whitest wool and most golden tissues into Dreadnaught and impervious coverings for those whom *she* has warped; and their blackest, coarsest, and most cross-grained threads, for all whom she has more especially favoured.

Mr. Benaraby was still busy in the fabrication of his great Benarabian Hebrew point controversy; yet, being out of office, he had much to endure, more especially in the way of squibs and pasquinades,—his name and race; but above all, his total want of political principle, being especially obnoxious to profane

jeesting. Multiplex were the similes of which he was made to form the *point de mire*; the opposition papers said of him—"Issachar is a strong ass, crouching between two burdens." But as there was no doubt as to his *strength*, and a great many as to his assinine qualifications, he calmly replied, that "he saw that *rest* was good, and the *land* was pleasant." Still, in this compulsory *rest*, he felt that he was no longer one

"Whose smile was transport, and whose frown was fate!"

But if his most intimate associates were guilty of the indiscretion of alluding to the miscarriage of his Budget, a slight frown would knit his brow, and he would reply with a shrug, "It was an admirable saying that of Lord Burleigh's—that he 'never cared to see the Treasury swell like a disordered spleen when the other parts of the constitution were in a consumption.'" And then, turning on his heel, with a brief whistle, he would change the subject by bursting into an enthusiastic and ecstatic eulogium upon some new pudding, or new pantomime, that he had lately encountered; for well did our Issachar merit all the praises (?) bestowed upon Sir Francis Walsingham by Wicquefort and Dr. Lloyd, as he, too, always surprised business, and preferred motions in the heat of other diversions; and if he must debate it, he would hear all. The Spanish proverb was familiar with him: "Tell a lie, and find a truth;" flanked with that other piece of Castilian wisdom, "Speak no more than you may safely retreat from without danger, or fairly go through with without opposition." Dexterous he was in finding a secret and keeping it. His conversation was brilliant and insinuating; and though apparently candid to a folly, was in reality the quintessence of caution, hermetically sealed. "He saw every man, and no man saw him. He would say he must observe the joints and flexures of affairs, and so do more with a story or a *bon mot*, than others could with an harangue." I don't know whether we can quite add, that "his head was so strong that he could look into the depths of men and business;" but we

certainly may say, that *he* also "could dive into the whirlpools of State," though not, perhaps, without his head becoming somewhat more *dizzy* than it originally was. His friend, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, on the contrary, finding that in political life there was nothing but molework for him to do, or a subterranean progress to make that was not apparent to the eyes of men, vigorously struggled to the surface upon the scum of clap-trap—Philanthropy, in the moral (!) and educational line, indefatigably giving lectures, and attending meetings for the promotion of all popular questions. For as none can touch pitch without being defiled, so neither can any man dabble in popular questions without, in one sense, becoming popular—that is, known to the public;—which is, at all events, the "tinkling cymbal and sounding brass" of celebrity. And this was, upon the whole, a far less arduous undertaking than Mr. Benaraby's delvings into Calasio's Hebrew Concordance, and the "Divine Legation of Moses;" inasmuch as the tug between Fiction and Truth is always a much harder struggle than the encounter of Falsehood with folly. Fraulein had written to Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars a most pathetic appeal in behalf of poor Union Jack, requesting him to exert his influence in getting letters to the Governor of Port Phillip, that would induce the latter to interest himself about the young convict. The clever man, after reading this letter, first crumpled it in his hand, then flung it into the fire, (for he always kept up the fire, winter and summer), and finally thrust it between the bars with the point of his boot; after which he scrawled three hasty lines to Fraulein, assuring her that he would do everything in his power to meet her wishes, by serving that poor boy, whose history was truly a melancholy one. This note sealed and despatched, he rubbed his hands and said—

"Come, I've got rid of *that*, and she'll never be the wiser, that I have not stirred in the matter. Upon the whole, I must say that I *am* devilish lucky in getting rid of people who are in my way; and though I have been greatly worried and impeded by Florence's obstinacy, in not letting me send her out of the

country, still death must soon come to my assistance, for she is now evidently progressing towards his gates by forced marches."

And here a change came over the kaleidoscope of his musings, as he ground his teeth and clenched his hand. The fact is, he had turned into another condemned cell of his own mind, and was deliberating how he could, if not quite break off Edith's marriage, at all events render both her and her intended as wretched as possible, by some double calumny against both, which should eternally rankle in the mind of each. For as a renovator and reproducer of French plays, nobody was better aware than he was of the truth of Scribe's assertion:—

"Calomnie ! calomnie ! il en reste toujours quelque chose !"

"No," said he aloud, tightly closing his right eye, and plunging the poker with great vengeance into the heart of the fire, as if had been at a tournament, rushing at his foe lance in hand, *à mort*—"No; it is not so easy to break off a marriage, when a man is so madly in love as he is with her. The best plan will be to embitter their whole lives after they are married, and as a husband he is more likely to do my work effectually, of torturing her, than any lover could do; and as it is astonishing how much killing women take, the process is likely to be a long one, so I shall be able to watch every quiver of each separate agony. Ha!"

And drawing a long breath again, the clever man rubbed his hands with satisfaction; and then, ringing the bell, called for his hat and gloves, and sallied forth to deliver a lecture on the necessity of moral training and mental culture for all classes. And thus Satan, the hardest-worked poor devil we know, (not excepting the printers), was at his old task of "reproving sin!"

As for the Venerable the Archdeacon Panmuir, he had turned over a new chapter of existence, since the prospect of being cousin to a Duchess had opened upon him; and he could scarcely have felt more elated had he become, by some compound miracle, *Dean and Chapter* of St. Paul's. There is a sort of mesmeric phenomena we hear of in somnambulists, who,

though ignorant as posts in their waking and normal states, yet are at these times miraculously endowed with the gift of tongues, and speaking all languages, both living and dead, fluently, from Hebrew to Chinese; though when wide awake, ignoring even their mother tongue, beyond its most perverted vulgate. And with this miraculous gift comes to them, also, divers other knowledges, of which, till then, they were as innocent as every "*British female!*" should be, who does not wish to run the risk of being anathematized as "a strong-minded woman." And ever since the announcement of Edith's engagement to the Duke of Liddesdale, the same species of phenomenon seemed to be rife in Samuel Panmuir, who entertained, somehow or other, the strangely infatuated conviction, that *he* had been the *primum mobile* of the whole chain of circumstances, which had brought about this most devoutly wished-for event. And his great retrospective liking for Mr. Lancaster, and his secret approbation of Edith's evident partiality for him, were among the reverend gentleman's newly acquired knowledges.

Meanwhile, Edith was so happy, too happy! as she had once said in her delirium at Glenfern, on the occasion of poor Donald's death; and she was right, for happiness is an exotic, indigenous to heaven alone; and when a few stray petals are wafted to us by the sigh of some pitying angel, we eagerly graft them on our heart, nor know till the storm comes and sears us with its devastation, what a fearful thing it is to have thus woo'd a blight! It was Edith's wish to be married at the little parish church of Glenfern; there, at its humble altar, had she first publicly communed with her Saviour, and there, she wished to breathe the indissoluble vows to him, whom she loved only *less* than her God; in this wish her betrothed fully participated, and had gone to Scotland to make every preparation for their bridal, not a little delighted at the idea of her surprise! at seeing (thanks to all his improvements) the bright holiday look the dear old place would wear,—not that he had done anything to the moated house itself,—for he would not for a Principality

have changed a thing, or even removed a withered leaf about the place; no, he had studiously refrained from re-furnishing it till his *wife* should do so herself; on the contrary, the morning of the sale, Tuffnell had had his instructions to retain all the servants, and to give strict injunctions to the housemaids to keep up Edith's bed-room, dressing and sitting rooms precisely in the same order as she had left them; not a book nor a flower was to be moved; the latter were to be kept replenished, and that was all; so that when she came back, her absence might only seem like a long dream, of which her return was the happy waking!

But the village, the glen, and even the moor beyond,—oh! how beautiful he had made them! with happiness and habitations smiling on every side, despite the inhospitable climate, like staunch true hearts in the midst of every change and every storm still hopefully looking up. The “Panmuir Arms” had become the *beau idéal* of an Elizabethan gable-end house: and Amy Verner only wanted a pointed hat and a large ruff to have been worthy the days of Queen Bess, that is, as far as appearance went; for Heaven forbid! that even the worst woman now-a-days should be worthy of that royal emporium of every vice—that *maiden* queen, who sold her lover's chattels to pay his funeral expenses! and thus sent my Lord of Leicester's household gods a packing! thereby proving indisputably, that *she* was the first utilitarian. But to return to “metal more attractive.” Though corporeally separated, the twin spirits of Edith and Harold seemed more closely knit, more firmly united than ever. She had in him what so few women have—not only his whole heart, undivided by any contending passion, such as ambition, or avarice,—those two formidable, and generally ultimately triumphant rivals;—but she had also the first offerings of that heart, the bloom was still on it, for no breath but hers had ever passed over it. And she, on the other hand, had never had any young lady correspondents, in whose service to blot reams of paper with long, spun out, interminable nothings;

so, that she now poured out her whole heart in her letters to him with all the gushing freshness of a first outbreak; while in this daily interchange of their transcribed souls, their very identities seemed to be fused into ONE, and absence to be the only shadow that it cast forward on their future.

There are two classes of persons to whom preaching by machinery is particularly insupportable: one is, that more numerous class, the wounds of whose hearts are freshly bleeding on the rack of a recent sorrow—the great mob of earth, in fact; the other is the narrow circle of Heaven's *élite*, in whom the holy light of a great joy is diffused like a halo from the Creator, over their entire being. The former want the healings of sympathy for their wounds, which they cannot find in any of this conventional mechanism; and the latter want a larger valve through which to breathe their gratitude with more freedom, and with more expansion. But, verily, the theological machine meets neither of these exigencies. Edith, as we have before said, never could endure the Archdeacon's high church, high-pressure, cast-iron sort of pulpit *charges*; in which, even the very blessing and Lord's Prayer was thundered out more in an anathematical than a benedictory tone; and every heart that has really knelt at the foot of the Cross, to offer up the latter to its divine teacher, feels that there is something impious, either in loudly vociferating the imploring tenderness of its confiding supplications, or of hastily and carelessly slurring them over.

It was therefore joyfully that Edith accepted Alciphron Murray's offer of taking her to Kensington, to hear his old friend Mr. Wilmot preach; "for" said Murray, "I know you will like his preaching, for he neither compiles nor concocts his sermons, but he believes and he feels them, and consequently his congregation generally do the same; and no wonder, for affliction is the only alembic through which truths—even secular truths—and much more spiritual ones—can be distilled with genuine purity; and Heaven only knows, poor Wilmot has learnt those truths in grief which he teaches in gospel."

As they drove to Kensington, Murray related to Edith the details of the oft-repeated history of Florence's elopement; and how she, being his only child, it had prey'd upon the old man's life; but chiefly from the belief that she was living in infamy, from the fact of her never having let her father know where she was.

"Ah! that," said Edith, all in wiping the tears from her eyes, "is what I cannot forgive her; she can have no heart, or worse still, a very bad one, and so I have thought from the first time you told me this terrible history." "Judge not, lest ye be judged," rejoined Murray; "you don't know what omnipotent power, the lord and master the poor creature gave herself, may have over her; for I cannot put the worst construction on this fatal step of hers, as poor Wilmot does; for, except yourself, I never knew a more gentle, affectionate, angelically-toned girl than Florence was. And suppose, Edith," added he, with a melancholy smile, "when you are married, your husband ordered you to do, or not to do, any one thing, even to holding no communication with your father, were he living, or to shutting your doors in the face of me, your oldest friend—should you not feel yourself bound to obey? for young ladies should duly consider, and weigh this omnipotence of the marital tariff beforehand."

"No!" said Edith indignantly; "you seem to forget that I love Harold for the *good* and the *right* which are in him, and which are essentially and emphatically *him*; and could I detect anything (even to the slightest shade) crooked or bad in him, I should think him a changeling, and could no longer love him;—it is not to say that I would not, but I could not."

"I'm glad of it," rejoined Murray, "and I do firmly believe, that on the score of impregnable integrity (always barring the four years' gross imposture he practised upon you,) and genuine goodness, he is quite worthy of your love; and as for that little piece of deception," added he slyly, "why, it is a world old axiom, that all is fair in love and war, though a certain young lady used to affect to be horrified at such laxity of principle."

"And so I am still," laughed Edith, "only there is a wide difference between an assumption of a false position to defraud, to injure, and to entrap, and a harmless *ruse* to test the strength and sincerity of a woman's affection, when a ducal coronet and a heavy rental were glittering in the balance scale."

"Very true," smiled Murray, as the carriage stopped at the old church at Kensington; "*a wide difference between an assumption of a false position to defraud, to injure, to entrap; and when your dictionary comes out, Edith, you may put me down for at least half-a-dozen copies, which, you will own, is doing the thing handsomely!*"

The day was sultry, and the church was crowded, which rendered the heat still more oppressive. At the conclusion of the service the anthem was sung infinitely more harmoniously than is generally the case, for, in our rather more sectarian than Christian horror of Romanism, we go into the opposite extreme, and dedicate only the refuse of our talents to the house of God; for if ever there is a daub, it is generally secured for an altar-piece, and every one knows what the excruciating nasal screams of charity children are. But Mr. Wilmot—though only an occasional preacher at this church, during his two annual visits of about six weeks each, to his friend Colonel Chipchase, in Palace Gardens—had taken great pains with the choir, feeling, in his sincere and unaffected piety, that the *uttermost* should always be done, and the *best* offered in *every* department of God's service; for which reason he had, in early life, taken indefatigable pains with his own elocution, knowing from personal experience that a vulgar enunciation and mutilation of the fair proportions of language are apt to desecrate and deface the most sublime truths, and prevent their filling that niche in the soul which they were originally designed to occupy, and to adorn. Nature, it is true, had happily bestowed upon *him* that master key of persuasion, a melodious and touching voice. It was seldom or never loud; but it was so clear, distinct, and bell-like, so exquisitely modulated, and so *correctly* emphasized, that its feeblest

tones were sure to reach and awaken a responsive vibration in every heart; and it was a common saying among those who had once heard him, that they would go any distance only to hear him say the Lord's Prayer and give the blessing, which really seemed to flow direct from Heaven, through his lips, with all the holy unction of a *blessing*, and was not thundered out and rattled through, as if it had been merely an obligatory part of the ritual, which had no particular meaning attached to it. His appearance was apostolic and patriarchal in the extreme; for if the sword wears out the scabbard, so verily does the spirit wear and shine through its incarnate veil, telling either of the sacred lamp or the murky fire that burns within. His hair was as white as snow; the forehead high, broad, and intellectual; the eyes of a dark and expressive blue; the nose straight and handsome, and, as well as the mouth, finely chiselled; his face was very pale, but smooth and placid,—for the waters of affliction, in passing over him, had mingled with a deep under current of resignation; and it is only sin which brands with the sharp searing irons of vice strong lines and indelible marks upon the wretches condemned to its galleys. When Mr. Wilmot ascended the pulpit and covered his face with his surplice, all hearts *felt* that he prayed, and *they* prayed with him. As soon as the hymn was ended, his low, clear voice, scarcely less musical, penetrated through every crevice of that old church, as he said,—

“IN THE EIGHTH CHAPTER OF ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS, BEGINNING AT THE NINTH VERSE, YOU WILL FIND THESE WORDS,—

“*If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*’ And how think you, my brethren, this Divine Spirit is to be attained? First, by subduing our *own*, which, generally, in the natural and unregenerate man, is the very *opposite* to His. Next, by diligently imploring Christ to endow us with *His* Spirit, for we cannot attain it by any means of our *own*, nor by any other means than through His assistance; and to those that ask it shall be given: for such is ‘*The glorious Gos-*

pel of Christ, of which '*There hath not failed one word of all this good promise.*' But still, Christ requires of us something more than prayer: He requires of us *actions*, which are the fruits of prayer; for is it not expressly told us that He does not consider those as belonging to HIM, who merely say unto Him, 'Lord, Lord, but *those who do His will.*' And oh! blessed provision in that stupendous and eternal monument of God's goodness to us, the scheme of our redemption. To *do His will* is within the power of the very humblest capacity amongst us, for it only requires obedience and *sincerity*. It does *not* require any great grasp, or reach, of intellect—any subtle analyses of doctrinal quibbles or theological mysteries; on the contrary, theology perplexes truth, but Christianity elucidates it; and controversy separates men, but Christianity, if it be genuine, unites them: for no one can *really* love Christ, and not love his neighbour also, which Christ has so repeatedly and so strenuously enjoined us to do; but *all* love is an *active*, and not a passive feeling; and therefore must be evinced by *deeds*, and not words; but, unfortunately, from the beginning, the glorious Gospel portals of Christianity, which God threw open wide, graciously inviting the *whole world* to enter, men have closed into narrow sectarian ingresses, through which none but the *few* who make for *their* particular aperture are allowed to pass. And worse still, they have cast the texts of Scripture into a sort of current coin, which they have ever ready to bestow upon the sorrows and wants of their suffering fellow creatures, in lieu of more active charity, and of more sympathizing *help*; so that, for every trouble they will fling you a text, but that is *all*. It has been well remarked by Bishop Forbes, 'that good is not done by dragging religion, head and shoulders, into common conversation, nor are souls saved by making oneself disagreeable. Wisdom, and prudence, and good sense are as necessary in what regards the next world, as in what regards this. Careful thought and *earnestness* are necessary to the great work of being our brother's keeper, and a judicious *activity* is the condition of a

real success in this way.' Nothing can be more true than this; for to a person labouring under an acute and positive sorrow, or a strong and overwhelming trial, there are few things more offensive and repugnant than to receive in full of all consolation, or aid, a string of ready cut and dry conventional texts; and it is not that *even* the most hardened *revolt* against the *truths* contained in these quotations: on the contrary, for even to *such*, the soothing sympathies of *practical* Christianity, by softening, in a measure subdues their sorrow; but it is that a heart struggling with a great grief recoils from the *cold* conventional want of all participatory feeling evinced by the doling out of these textual alms. It is a common thing to hear persons say, in speaking of their neighbour's afflictions, 'I am very sorry, but, unfortunately, I can do nothing.' This is *not true*. *Every one*, from the king on his throne to the beggar at that king's gate, has the power of doing *much* to lighten the burdens of their suffering fellows; for *sympathy* is a mighty lever, that can lift the greatest weights. There are, it is true, some peculiar burdens which only pecuniary assistance can remove; but even those very persons who have it least in their power to bestow *this sort* of relief, might, were they to *exert* themselves, and set aside their small, low pride and great selfishness—obtain these means through other channels. But, on the other hand, there are infinitely more numerous cases which need no greater sacrifice than a small giving up of our time, and a temporary relinquishing of our favourite pursuits. The French have an admirable saying—'One can pay with one's person;'^{*} and this is what every Christian, who deserves that blessed name, is daily and hourly called upon to do. There are, doubtless, few here to-day, even among the youngest portion of my auditors, who have been so fortunate as never to have lain upon the bed of illness; and when thus brought low, surely they can remember with what gratitude they used to hail the arrival of the good

* "On peut payer de sa personne."

Samaritan ; who came not, indeed, for a hurried or compulsory looking in upon them, or a formal inquiry, were it made six times a day, to know how they were ; but, to the really Christian soul, who would give up its time to sitting by their bed-side, ministering to their wants, and beguiling the weary and languid hours of suffering by its presence, and the healing sympathy of showing that it really *cared for their cares* ; for we are all apt, when left to the aggravating influences of solitude, under severe bodily or mental anguish, to imagine that we are abandoned of God and man ; and we may be pardoned for this feeling, since Omnipotence itself, under its mental burden, was oppressed by it, and while the Saviour on Calvary was consummating our redemption with his Godhead, the cry of 'My God ! my God ! why hast thou forsaken me ?' was wrung from the agony of his suffering humanity ! and who knows, but that the poor penitent thief's supplication of 'Oh ! Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom ?' may not have touched some chord of true sympathy in the wondrous duality of the expiring prophet's, and the resuscitating Divinity's nature, which responded in the glorious promise of 'this day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.' For from heaven to earth, and back again from earth to heaven, there can be *no sympathy* where there is *no intercourse*, and this national keeping aloof from one another, that we are prone to, is at the root of all our sins ; it does not indeed prevent our being what is called a religious people, but it essentially militates against our being a *Christian* people ; for in the words of the text,—'If any man have not the SPIRIT of Christ, he is none of his ;' and Christ's spirit was an essentially social and Samaritan one ; in the first attribute it did not confine itself to preaching in the Temple, but fused with the joys, sorrows, and yearnings of humanity ; and in the second, it ministered to human wants, and bound up human wounds, thereby showing us in all the transcendent beauty of a divine example, that *Christianity* is a precious talisman to carry about *with us* into each and all of the ever varying scenes of life, and not a

mere moulded amulet to shut ourselves up with in our closets, selfishly thinking how it may benefit our *individual soul*. Nor is it, even, to be *exclusively* laid with the precious vessels on the altar; but it is to be *ever* with us, evidenced *towards* and *shared with* our fellow creatures, even as Christ proved and diffused it among men, not in weighed portions, or restricted measures, but as the *ONE* great fountain, whose source being in heaven, can never be exhausted by any drains that earth may make upon it, whether it flow in wine at a marriage feast, or in tears at a deathbed. Oh! my brethren, if men would but follow the broad high road, the pleasant path of *Gospel truth*, and leave the narrow, miry, and cumbered back-ways of controversial theology, how much sooner and more safely would they find their way to heaven; but they have indeed 'sought out many inventions,' by all of which they sorely mislead and perplex themselves. An elegant Deist* of the last century, said, that it was reading Fontenelle's 'Plurality of Worlds' which had shaken his belief in Christianity. Now this avowal was as shallow as it was sinister, for *supposing* that the multiplicity of worlds amounted in number to as many grains as there are sands on the sea shore; in the first place, it does not follow that they are all or any of them peopled by the animal man, and by the same graduated scale of inferior animals necessary to *his* existence; but, even granting that they were, and that this could be ascertained beyond a doubt; still it does not follow, that *they* should have sinned like *our* first parents, and forfeited their primeval heritage of innocence. But allowing that such also was the case, and going a step beyond, and pre-supposing that they had even sinned *more* than we had—a difficult supposition I grant—yet still the Omnipotence which had deigned to *condense* its will into saving so small a segment of the universe as *our* globe, could surely at pleasure, suffice in its *expansion* for the redemption of all creation. But, my dear brethren, as I be-

* Horace Walpole.

fore said, there is nothing so profitless, or much worse, so positively injurious, as wasting the time and energies that should be devoted to God's service, in toiling up the miry steepes of these cloud-capped speculations, which either by shaking our own faith in diverting it from the true light, or exciting our angry passions by trying to extinguish the false lights of *others*, can only endanger our safety, without in any way conducing even to our temporal satisfaction; for all the premises *without* the pale of the Apocalypse, being false, all arguments for and against such must be equally false; as those for instance, who, with hot zeal, though in cold blood, thunder their anthems against the doctrine of transubstantiation, generally employ the most shallow of all arguments against it, by appealing to people's *reason*, as to whether it is possible to believe in such an absurdity? Now the only absurdity of this is the illogical nature of this appeal; for nothing is an absurdity, as to being incredible, which comes within the scope of God's power; and what is there that does not? Therefore, upon the score of reason the quotidian miracle of transubstantiation is not one single mystery more incomprehensible to the narrow limits of human capacity, than the *one* stupendous original miracle of God's incarnation; but the true ground for repudiating the real presence in the Eucharist, is, the well-authenticated fact that this idea was only started by a French monk, in the ninth century, and not adopted by the Anglo-Catholic church till two centuries later; and the laws of the *ETERNAL* never remain in abeyance, but are the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever!

But the reason that this species of doctrinal theology ought to be so especially avoided, is, that it may make *Canterbs*, but it will not make *Christians*; it may indeed send people regularly to church three times a day, to weary Heaven with lip worship, and to Sunday Schools, to do a little conventional parrot work there. But such persons, by making religion odious, are its worst enemies; and whosoever looks from such grafts for the beautiful fruits of Christianity, in their dealings with, and bear-

ing towards, their fellow creatures, will be disappointed; for we 'cannot gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles;' '*and if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his*;' for the spirit of Christ it is, which at once prompts and enables us to bear one another's burdens; the spirit of Christ it is, and the spirit of Christ *only*, which can enable us to bear our own; for some there are, so heavy! that no mortal spirit could bear up under them, save by the holy aid of his divine one. And it is with spiritual, as with human warfare, in God's army of martyrs as in the mercenary armies of monarchs, the bravest hearts, and stanchest natures, are always placed in the vanguard to bear the brunt of the battle! but in the spiritual warfare, the true centurion of God knows that the *end is not yet*, and does not anticipate either his rest or his reward in this world; for if he did—seeing how often it falls out that there is neither, for the righteous, while the ungodly have (apparently) all things at their desire, and bask life away like a summer holiday,—he would be tempted to lay down his arms, and desert his standard, saying,—'Verily, my lot is too relentlessly unjust.' But no; such an one, humanly speaking, neither looks around him to compare the prosperity of others with his own misfortunes, nor forward, towards those promissory notes, which the FUTURE, that world-old bank, issues so lavishly; but he looks *upward!* and girding his strong armour of faith and obedience the more firmly around him, feels as well as remembers, that Heaven's greatest victories are achieved by Earth's forlorn hopes!"

"Oh! think not, my dear brethren, that I preach to you 'as one having authority,' even as a minister of Christ; no, I rather appeal to your hearts from my own, as 'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.' Would that my resemblance to my Divine master were not limited to this; my sorrows, indeed, may not be yours, and God forbid that they should; but still, sorrow is the parent stem of all created beings, the one great link

'That makes all nature kin!'

And each individual heart 'knoweth its own bitterness,' and while that bitterness lasts, all the waters of Marah, were they to flood it, could not increase its gall; for a vessel can *but* be full.

"Let us, then, try and prevent this bitterness from degenerating into the worldly poison of selfishness, misanthropy, and despair, by converting it, even as the Hebrews did their bitter herbs, into a meet and acceptable offering to the Most High. But, alas! my brethren, the *same* process by which the Jews made their bitter herbs into fragrant incense, is necessary for our poor hearts. Much crushing, much bruising, much *fusion*, not only with our *similitudes*, but with our *opposites* in degree, nature, and value, and ultimate purification, for which not even the furnace of affliction, *singly*, is sufficient. No; it must be by a coal from the altar itself! a spark of sacred fire, too pure to be dimmed by any earthly mists, and too ardent to be quenched by any worldly storms: that alone can render it worthy in its turn to be offered up as a holy sacrifice unto God. And now, in conclusion, I will merely remind you of St. John's new commandment, 'That ye love one another;' prudence, as well as piety, should induce you to do so; for we *all have* suffered, *are* suffering, or *will* suffer; it is the immutable law of nature, and, therefore, cannot be repealed; but it is also written, that 'the merciful shall find mercy.' To love one another is to *feel* for and to *help* one another; and though, indeed, we often do, and shall meet with the basest ingratitude from those we have gone most out of our way to serve, yet *our* harvest will be equally *sure*, for 'as ye sow, so shall ye reap,' 'I will repay, saith the Lord.' Therefore, look to no *human* being for reward; for, verily, like all things human, they will disappoint you; but let them disappoint as they may, 'be ye not weary of well-doing;' for, if we stand aloof from the misfortunes of *whatsoever kind* of our fellow-creatures, from the selfish fear of

inculpating ourselves in them, and experiencing personal inconvenience, which is all summed up in that not very elegant, but peculiarly English phrase, of *getting ourselves into a mess*, we have *not* the spirit of Christ, for the spirit of Christ is CHARITY, which hopeth all things! endureth all things! and accomplisheth all things!"

The attention of the whole congregation had been breathless, during Mr. Wilmot's sermon; for, what Addison said of Bishop Atterbury, might with equal truth be said of him, that "he added to the propriety of speech which might pass the criticism of Longinus, an action which would have been approved by Demosthenes; and he never attempted to touch the feelings till he had first convinced the reason; all the objections that could be formed he laid open and dispersed before he used the least vehemence in his sermon; but when he had your head, he very soon won your heart, for he never pretended to show the *beauty* of holiness till he had first convinced you of the *truth* of it."

In the management of his melodious voice he had the most consummate artistic skill: indeed, it might be said of him, also, as the biographer of Bishop Horne said of Bishop Hinchcliffe's preaching: "It was remarkable, and, to those who did not know the cause, mysterious; that there was not a corner of the church in which he could not be heard distinctly; the reason was, that the bishop made it an invariable rule to do justice to every consonant, knowing that the vowels will be sure to take care of themselves."

Mr. Wilmot did the same; and at once the peculiar feature and the triumph of his elocution, was its bland *distinctness*; there were no vociferations beyond the compass of his voice, losing themselves in a squeak; no steam-engine efforts at emphatic effects; all was one calm, deep, harmonious *equal* flow, yet *so clear* as to be as thrillingly distinct as the metallic tones of a bell through the silent air of midnight. Any man so gifted, more especially any man called to the high privilege of

being a minister of God, may surely exclaim, with honest, because grateful, pride—

“His me consolor victurum suavius ac si
Quæstor avus pater atque meus, patruusque fuissent.”

Before Edith had finished her concluding prayer, her attention was distracted by hearing the following queries muttered in a pew behind her :—

“What hever *shall* I do now? Just as I feared hit would be, hand no footman, nor no nothink, heven for to go for a cab; and *I that* weak hand *that* nervous, that hanybody might knock me down with a feather. Ho, dear! ho, dear! what hever *shall* I do!”

Rising from her knees, and looking over into the next pew, Edith beheld an immense pile of black crape, something like the gigantic helmet in the castle of Otranto; while, like

“The new moon, in the old moon’s lap,”

leaning against it, lay a slight figure in a grey silk dress, with a white drawn bonnet, and a thick white veil, covering, and entirely concealing the face. Edith immediately perceived that this lady was fainting; and, banding the black crape a *façon* of aqua d’oro, she said: “Had you not better raise her veil?”

“Hextremely hobleegeed to you, um, I’m sure,” said Mrs. Bousefield, taking the proffered smelling-bottle, and putting it under the invalid’s veil; “but there his reasons why I dussent raise my lady’s veil till I get her hout of this: hand ’ow to do that, I’m sure I don’t know; for hit’s hunpossible that I can leave her to go for a cab, to say nothink hof my being *that* weak hand *that* nervous myself, that hanybody might knock me down with a feather!” concluded Mrs. Bousefield, in the same confidential whisper.

“Oh! you need not distress yourself about that,” said Edith, “for I’m in a clarence, and can take you both home.” And

then turning to Murray, she told him to go and see for the carriage; but she had scarcely done so, before the servant came to take her books, and announce that it was ready.

"What a beautiful young lady, to be sure!" thought Mrs. Bousefield, looking at Edith, "hand the very himage hof Lady Heveliner Highflyer, the Countess of Coddlecat's niece, hexcept that Lady Heveliner 'ad black air, hand light heyeyes, hand not quite so good a figure, being rather short hand stout; but then, hof course there his a sort of famly likeness hamong hall the harrystocracy, by which one can halways tell has they his them."

But the widow was here interrupted in her visionary wanderings through her favourite elysium of the *élite*, by Murray coming into her pew and asking her if she would allow him to carry the lady to the carriage; whereupon Mrs. Bousefield hastily lowered her black crape drop-scene, and felt more feathery and epileptic than ever at the sight of him, as she replied—

"Hif you would be so good, sir, I should be much obleeged to you."

He then lifted poor Florence in his arms, like an infant, and made his way through the now departing congregation, followed by Edith and Mrs. Bousefield, who whispered the former confidentially:—

"The fact his, mum, you've been so kind that I may tell you, hin conferdence, that my lady's his a sad 'istry. Poor thing! she 'loped hof some five hor six years ago, and I'm sorry to say hit, married a perfect blackguard! I call him, who 'as been all that time a killing hon her, by the foot I should say, more than by hitches—a shutting hon her hup, hand not howning hon her has his wife, hand a subjecting hon her, poor thing, to hevery species hof privation hand pokery; while 'e's a gal-lanting about hand a wallering hin hevery lugshurry, hinstead hof a wallering hin mire, has such a selfish 'og orght to do; hand too good for him, too, for the 'ogs do keep to their hown

sty, they do, hand don't go about a gammoning hof hothers ! But I was a going to say, mum,—honly whenever I talk hof this good-for-nothink feller, it puts me so beside myself that I've a difficulty hin finding myself again. So different from poor dear Mr. Bousefield ! my 'usban, mum, who'd 'ave give me goold to heat, hif so be as I'd a fancied it ; but *my* poor lady, she says to me this morning,—‘Barlow,’ says she, for she halways calls me Barlow, that 'aving been my maiden name when I lived with her mammar,—‘Barlow,’ says she, ‘I know I cannot last long now, and I cannot bear the highdear hof dying without looking upon my poor father's face once more. So I *will* go hand 'ear him preach, and by that means I shall carry away what I do not deserve, and therefore never dare hask his blessing.’ I did hall hever I could to persuade her *not to*, knowing has she could never stand the sight hon him, poor, dear hold gentleman, but hit was hall hof no use. Come she would ; hand, as for me, when I see Mr. Halciphron Murray a sitting right before us—her par's most hintimate friend, that I knowd halmost has well has poor dear Mr. Bousefield—I thought has that would have set her hof ; but, no, there she sat a crucifying hon herself with her heyes nailed upon her father, till hit was hall hover, hand *then* she fainted *away*, as you see, mum, hand—”

But whatever further communications Mrs. Bousefield was about to make, were prevented by the return of Hinton, the footman, with Mr. Murray's compliments, and “he'd be much obliged to Miss Panmuir to make haste to the carriage ?”

She did so, having in the widow's hurried and confused narration, gleaned that the long-lost Florence Wilmot was at length found ! and her first feeling was one of sympathetic gladness at the idea of the joy this would occasion to that good, benevolent-looking old man, whose words had made so deep an impression on her that morning, and over whose sorrows, when described to her by Murray, she had so often wept ; but when she saw all that was left of that poor heart-stricken old man's once

blooming child, a feeling of paralyzing pity and intense grief succeeded this transient glow of delight.

"Oh, Edith, such a discovery!" said Murray, as she reached the carriage door.

"I know it all," said Edith, wiping her streaming eyes, as she got in and seated herself opposite to the deadly pale and still insensible Florence, whose head, more like an alabaster bust than any living thing, reclined on Murray's shoulder, while he told Mrs. Bousefield to tell the coachman where to go, and then to make haste and get in.

"Good heavens! Barlow, is that you?" said he, now looking at her for the first time, as soon as she was seated, and they had driven off; "and is it possible that *you*, who knew her as a child, could connive at her concealment from her poor father all these years?"

"Well, but now just look here, Mr. Murray," began Mrs. Bousefield, who, as we have before stated, was a sort of petticoated pope, whose infallibility was not even to be suspected, much less impeached, "when Miss Florence *'loped hoff*, ad I a been with her, hand she'd 'ave hasked me to 'elp her hin such a thing, I should 'ave said, 'No, Miss Florence, *sutenly not*, for I scorn to deceive your par! hand such a good par as he 'ave been to you, hand such a good master has he 'ave *bin* to me;' but, wherehoff, hit was no such a thing, has you must be very well aware, sir, knowing has marriage was the least thing in my 'ead then, seeing has I was trying hall I could to get hon has a widder, which his sorer enough hin himself! Well, about fifteen months ago, Miss Florence writes to me, hand hasks hif I, has an experienced ooman, would come hand take care hof her small famly, hand that was the first has I knowd of her being married.—"

"And who is she married to?" breathlessly interrupted Murray.

"Har! *who*, hindeed?" re-echoed Mrs. Bousefield, with one of her most contemptuous tosses of her black crape cupola,

"he calls hisself Mr. 'Enery, but he aint no more a Mr. 'Enery than I am, I'm pretty sure; hand when he comes with his fine carriages and osses, I've tried a many hand a many times to get hout from 'his servants the real names hof the feller—*black-guard*! I call him—but they honly laughs and winks at one hanother, hand says has he's halways Mr. 'Enery, for Magnolier Lodge—for like master, like man—so hof course they hall 'ang together, hand it's a pity but they was hall 'anged together—*blackguards*, I call 'em!"

"What! then," said Murray, "does not this Mr. Henry, whom you call her husband, live with her?"

"Oh! dear, no; *he's* always about amusing hon hisself, hand going here, hand running there, while he mews her hup, poor dear young lady; hand what his wus than hall, thof *he* don't live with 'er, he just makes it seem for all the world has hif *she* lived with *him*."

"Then I'm afraid after all," groaned Murray, "that they are not married."

"Ho! yes, but they hare, sir; but has he says has hit would be the ruin hon him hif so be has his marriage was known—hon account hof some rich hold relation a leaving hon him a fortin—he halways threatens poor Miss Florence, least-ways, Mrs. 'Enery, that he'll break their marriage, if she tells her par where she is."

"How do you mean, break their marriage, if they *are* married? Villain, as he is, *that*, thank heaven, is a piece of villany *not* in his power to commit."

"I fear hit his, sir," sighed Mrs. Bousefield, "has hit happens that neither hof them was hof hage when they *got* married."

"He may have been villain enough to persuade *her* to this, but thank heaven it is not so; how, and where, can I see this wretch?" asked Murray, clenching his hand.

"Ho, he *ginrally* comes about once a week, and Sunday his *mostly* his day; he comes, poor dear, not to see how she be,

but how soon she will cease to be, his *my* belief," said Mrs. Bousefield, wiping the corner of her eyes.

"You see, as I suspected," said Murray, turning to Edith, who was still chafing Florence's temples and the palms of her hands, without however being able to elicit the least symptom of returning animation, "there was some demon power at work to prevent this poor misguided girl from writing to her father."

"Hif you *do* see him, sir," broke in Mrs. Bousefield—her eyes dancing with delight at the mere anticipation of such a thing—"I know has you used down amongst poor Mr. Wilmot's parishioners to be reckoned a capital player hat football; hand thof hit *his* Sunday, I 'ope has you wont debar yourself hof a little wholesome hexercise hand hamusement hon the feller's back—*blackguard*! I call him."

"He shall not go unpunished, you may rely upon it," replied Murray, grinding his teeth and clenching his hand; which promise seemed so satisfactory to Mrs. Bousefield, that she turned to Edith, and said, with a bland smile,—

"I'm sure, mum, you're very good, hand you're giving yourself a *deal* of trouble, hand tiring yourself, I fear, for nothing; for when my poor lady gets hinto one of those here sounds—which she hoften does hafter hany hextra hagitation hor hexcitement—she'll remain hin 'em for hours hand hours, hand there's no bringing hon her to, do what one will."

"But used this Mr. Henry, or whoever he is, visit at Mr. Wilmot's?" asked Murray; "for the most extraordinary part of the business is, that after his daughter's elopement, he says he never missed any young men from the house who were in the habit of coming to it."

"No, sir," replied Mrs. Bousefield; "she 'ave told me that about six months before she loped hof with him, she had gone hon a visit to her mar's hold friend, Mrs. Trevor Boynton, hin Yorkshire; hand hit was *there* she met this 'ere good-for-nothink villand."

"Ah! then that accounts for poor Wilmot being at a loss

whom to suspect," sighed Murray; "but this wretch must have the calculating craft of the very devil himself, to have gone off with her so long after her visit to Mrs. Boynton, and never to have presented himself even once at her father's house, so as to effectually ward off all suspicion from himself and baffle all clue to tracing her."

"Ho, as to that, sir," volunteered Mrs. Bousefield, "I should be the last person to wish to take the devil's part, hat the same time I should be very sorry to 'ave heven the devil haccused wrongfully, hor made hout *wus* than he is, being, has we hall know, quite bad enough for hall husefull purposes; but I must say, in *my* humble hopinion, knowing has I do this here Mr. 'Enery hintemately, hand the devil honly by 'earsay, that I think the devil would 'ave hevery reason to feel hissself *greviously* hinsulted hat being spoked hof hin the same breath with him, let halone compared with him, which there haint no comparison; for has the sayin his, 'the devil halways takes care hof his hown,' which his more than that ere villand of a Mr. 'Enery does."

And this piece of moral philosophy of Mrs. Bousefield's brought them to the gate of Magnolia Lodge, which Joe Roberts, now "*tidied up*," *en permanence*, opened. Murray gently lifted the still insensible Florence from the carriage, and having been directed by Mrs. Bousefield to "go in to the *drawing* room hon the right *and* side, *hand* lay her *hon* the *sofer*," she next got out herself, and casting a furtive glance of approval at Joe's toilet, informed him *en passant*, that she was *that* weak hand *that* nervous that *she* wanted carrying quite as much as her mistress. However, he did not take the hint; so after resting a few seconds upon his arm in alighting, and leaning all her weight upon it, as she kept turning her head from one side to the other and panting in the most impromptu and unprecedented manner, which caused Mr. Roberts to express a professional fear that she *was rather touched in the wind!*" At this she gave herself an impetus with a final sigh, saying she

must go to her lady, merely adding for Joe's future guidance, that he need not again answer the gate-bell, "has *them* was not the sort of rings she wanted him to look hafter."

Murray had laid Florence gently down upon the sofa, taken off her bonnet, put back her hair off her forehead, and chafed her temples with eau de cologne; yet still without the slightest symptom of returning animation. Upon Mrs. Bousefield's entrance, after a few more obligato groans, over her *own* state of feebleness and nervousness, she took off her mistress's shoes, and began rubbing her feet; but her efforts to awaken the poor sufferer to consciousness were attended with no better success than Murray's had been; but while they were all three thus employed, for Edith had taken her hand, the cry of an infant was heard in the room overhead.

"She has children then?" said Murray, the big tears which had stood still in his eyes now rolling over, down his cheeks.

"Yes, sir, three; hand *I*, that 'ave lost six dear hinfants, find hall my comfort in 'arf the number of poor Mrs. 'Enery's, sir," replied Mrs. Bousefield, wiping her eyes; "but I'm sure has that poor dear babby his hill, he his so huncommon cross and hopstropolis, these last two days."

"How old are the other two children?" asked Murray.

"Master 'Enery his five hand-a arf, hand Miss Florence four hand-a-arf, sir."

"You had better go and bring them here; perhaps the sound of their little voices may do more towards arousing her than all our efforts; for the ears of a mother's heart are never deaf till the pulses of her heart are mute."

As soon as Mrs. Bousefield had closed the door after her, Murray said to Edith—

"When the children come down, I will go for poor Wilmot; painful as this meeting and parting! in ohe, will be, I know it will be a melancholy consolation to him to give his poor misguided child his blessing and his forgiveness, to smooth her way to Heaven. Might I ask you, dear Edith, to stay with her till we return?"

"How could you suppose that I *would* leave her?" rejoined Edith reproachfully—taking off her bonnet and flinging it upon a table, as she drew a chair to the couch and seated herself beside Florence.

"No," said Murray; "only I am not quite sure that it is right to leave you here, or that I am at all justified in doing so, considering the equivocal light poor Florence is no doubt viewed in, in this neighbourhood, not the most respectable one in the world; and the risk there is of that Mr. Henry, whoever the wretch may be, arriving, while you are here alone. My fears are not about you, Edith, for 'to the pure all things are pure;' but I am not quite sure that the Duke would like it?"

"Don't call him the Duke; I hate to hear him called the Duke; but I know Harold better than you do; and therefore I know that *he* always looks to the *truth*, and to the *real* motives of all actions, and consequently if I wanted to forfeit his esteem, or incur his displeasure, I am sure the most effectual method of doing so, would be for me to allow a piece of hollow, selfish, prudential conventionalism, to stand between me and the performance of an imperative act of common humanity; but for that very reason, as he is so noble, so generous, so single-minded, and unlike the generality of people, I grant, that so *real* and *bright* an honour should be all the more nicely cared for, and the more scrupulously guarded; therefore, as soon as you have brought poor Mr. Wilmot here, you had better go to the Duchess, and tell her all, and I know she will come to me immediately, and where *she* is calumny dare not enter."

"You are right, Edith; and may God's blessing ever rest on two such pure and congenial spirits as yours and his."

"And don't forget to add a prayer, that *I* may be worthy of him," said Edith; "for it seems to me that nothing out of Heaven can be so: look at this poor wreck, and how am I in any way better, that I should sail upon such a sea of prosperity, with such a mate!" added she, as her hot tears fell upon poor Florence's cold hand.

Mrs. Bousefield now returned, holding a child in each hand ; nor did she release them without an injunction to them to be very good, and walk over to their mamma on tiptoe ; which they did, followed by Alp, their friend and victim ; for a moment regardless of the hands of Edith and Murray, that were held out to them, they stood looking at their mother. Florence, with her frock in her mouth, and her little cheeks growing gradually paler, and her brother with his hands held out at arms length behind his back, and his head poked forward so as the better to scrutinize her face ; at length, he said, looking from one to the other of the assembled group, in a loud, half-angry, half-frightened voice,—

“Is mamma dead?”

He had uttered his little sister's thought, and having done so, the latter burst into an agony of tears, and hiding her face against her mother's, while she threw her arms about her neck, sobbed out—

“Oh ! mamma ! dear mamma ! don't die, come back to me ; or do, do, let me go with you !”

“No, darling, mamma is not dead, she is only fainting,” said Edith, hastening to relieve the child's grief, and removing her with gentle force from her mother's neck, to her own lap ; while poor Alp, more at home than any of them at such a scene, gave one of his deep-toned barks, and then lightly bounding (for so huge an animal) on the sofa, he stretched himself at full length over his mistress, and began licking her face and behind her ears, as if he had just rescued her from a snow-drift, on the top of the Great St. Bernard ; while, as if oppressed by his weight, Florence breathed a faint sigh ; but gave no additional sign of returning consciousness.

“Don't you take hon so, Miss Flo, there's a dear,” put in Mrs. Bousefield, as the little girl was still crying violently : Your poor mar, I'm sorry to say, his hoften hin these here faints, honly I don't never let you see her in 'em ; for, has I halways say, sorrer comes soon enough to children without bringing hof

children to sorer; hand so that's the reason, my dear, has you hain't never seen your mar in this state before."

All this time Murray had been making ineffectual efforts to induce Master Henry to take his proffered hand; but that young gentleman having almost got a crick in his neck by measuring him with his eyes, from head to foot, now turned his attention to Edith, and with a precocity of admiration, worthy of his father's son, uninvited, walked over to her, and put up his face to kiss her.

"Will you have the goodness, Barlow," said Murray, now taking up his hat in order to go for Mr. Wilmot, "on no account to leave Miss Panmuir (this young lady) while I am gone, for fear this Mr. Henry should arrive in my absence; and if he should—as it is more than probable that, for cogent reasons, he would barricade his doors against me and Mr. Wilmot, if we announced our arrival at the front gate—is there no other way by which we can enter without being seen?"

"Oh dear, yes, sir, there's the small gate has opens hinto the 'igh road, where the tradespeople comes to, and I'll set a *pusson* to watch there for your return."

With this assurance Murray departed, and the person set to watch at the little door opening into the road was Joe Roberts, while the maids were ordered to resume their accustomed ward over the great gates at the corner of the lane, which, strange to say, were the front entrance. Joe being at the back gate, and consequently beyond ear and eye shot of Mrs. Bousefield, it was astonishing how speedily and marvellously she recovered her strength and activity, which were exercised in preparing a suitable luncheon for Edith; she herself superintending the more scientific department, decanting the wine; but at the same time, with that semi-ubiquity of genius, finding time to overlook from the pantry and upbraid the cook's geographical clumsiness about the sandwiches, declaring that she "never see sich great, vulgar, ploughmen looking things in her life; hand hadn't she hoften told her and showed her 'ow sandwiches *ought* to be cut,

has they used to be hat the Dowager Countess of Coddlecat's, hin small triangles, such has hany sparrer might be hable to fly away with, without hinconvenience." And when the sandwiches were at length reduced to the critical standard of elegance, and had become

"Small by degrees, and beautifully less"—

the housemaid committed another great blunder in attempting to garnish a cold roast chicken with plain large-leaved parsley, instead of that which is by nature so daintily and elaborately curled, till Mrs. Bousefield, flinging it in her face in a passion, observed that she wondered she hadn't brought fig leaves, vine leaves, or even cabbage leaves, at once. Then came the final mystery of folding the napkins, which of course the widow would not intrust to any deputy; but which even *she*, with the high standards her memory furnished her for such matters, could not accomplish to her satisfaction.

"Drat the thing! I shall never do it! somehow or hother I can't get the right turn. That's hit, no hit haint; well, I never see such a fool of a thing. Ha, poor dear Mr. Bousefield was the man for folding a napkin, hand laying a table; but then *he* was clever hat heverythink, hand, has I halways said, hit was a pity as his talents should 'ave been hid hunder a napkin, and so did the Dowager Countess of Coddlecat; for has her ladyship used to say to him, 'Bousefield, hits a pity has you're not Prime Minister, for there hain't nothink that you can't put a face upon, hand make pass muster.'! But lawr! there aint no men like Mr. Bousefield now, I know; so the best way his not to give hit a thought, for when I do, hit makes me *that* low hand *that* nervous, that hanybody might knock me down with a feather."

Amid these and similar retrospective regrets, and present vituperations of the maid's variegated stupidity, Mrs. Bousefield at length accomplished the arrangement of the tray, and carried it herself into the drawing-room, making many apologies to Edith for the frugality of the fare; but saying that hafter Mr.

Halciphron Murray's hinjunctions to her not to leave the room, she did not like to stay longer away, and him such a little, humble, poky way of living, *she* was obliged to see to hevry hindividjel thing, "So that I hope, mum," concluded she, "that you will kindly hexcuse hall deficiencies."

Edith assured her that everything was exceedingly nice, but that she was sorry she should have taken the trouble of getting luncheon for her, as she was not the least hungry.

Whereupon Mrs. Bousefield, on the principle of doing as she would be done by, poured out a large bumper of port wine, and handed it to her; which, however, Edith declined; but not to appear ungracious, after the trouble that had been taken on her account, she said she would have a biscuit and some sherry and water.

"Well, has *you* please mum; but I halways find that when I ham *that* low hand *that* weak, hand 'ave 'ad my nerves hover hexcited hand hagitated, nothing does me so much good has a glass hof port wine; thof, now that I 'ave not got poor dear Mr. Bousefield here to downright force me like to take hit, I seldom hor hever touch hany think hof the kind."

Now this was one of the many mysteries of Magnolia Lodge; poor Florence, in her state, of course did not take wine; Mrs. Bousefield, by her own account, never did either, and from the other maids it was carefully locked up; and though "on hospitable thoughts intent," she always produced it on the rare occasions that anybody came there, yet it was generally left undiminished, save by a single glass; still, when again wanted, fresh wine had always to be opened, so that one of two things may be concluded,—either Mrs. Bousefield had gleaned from her husband a sort of Butler's Analogy, and therefore never offered such a flat contradiction to any one as long opened wine; or, hearing so much about chimneys consuming their own smoke, she had exerted her scientific energies in the construction of decanters on the self-absorbing principle of consuming their own contents.

Mrs. Bousefield had scarcely finished her discourse in praise of port, before a sharp, loud ring at the front gate was heard, which resounded through the whole house, set the poor baby up stairs (whom it awoke) rescreaming, and caused the glasses on the tray to vibrate.

"There! there his that good for nothink feller!" exclaimed Mrs. Bousefield ("coming all over in one of them dreadful heats!").

"Are you sure?" said Edith, turning rather pale, as her courage somewhat failed her now it came to the point, at the idea of meeting for the first time, alone, and under the peculiar circumstances, so bad a man.

"Sure," echoed Mrs. Bousefield, "don't I know his nasty *harbitary* ring, has much has to say, hopen the door before you 'ave time to get to hit, hor helse I'll pull the house down?"

And so far Mrs. Bousefield was right, it *was* that personage's peculiar ring, for he was in the habit of springing out of his brougham at some yards distance from the door, as physicians in great practice are wont to do, for *he* also, doctor like, was anxious to be "in at the death."

Edith's heart almost stood still, as she breathlessly listened for approaching footsteps, and mechanically drew little Florence, who was still seated on her lap, more closely towards her, from an intuitive feeling that so much innocence would be the best neutralization of so much guilt; while Alp, whose keen eye glared redly as he turned it towards the window, without, however, quitting his post by his mistress, uttered a low growl—which was generally his greeting to the *soi-disant* master of the house, who never made his appearance in this desecrated *home* without the supererogatory proceeding of leaving it still more desolate than he found it. Mrs. Bousefield, even, held her breath, and what was rarer still, her tongue, as she also strained her ears to listen; while Master Henry himself appeared daunted, as he got round to the back of Edith's chair, and there tightly grasped her dress, till his nails met in the palm of his hand,

a process equally painful to him and detrimental to her silk. The assembled group were not kept long in suspense, for, having cleared the lawn at three or four rapid strides, *à la* monster in Frankenstein, the next minute the clever man was in the hall, and had opened the drawing-room door.

At sight of Edith, the first expression of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' countenance was one of genuine and unmingled astonishment! its next phase was that of choking rage, at having this, his stronghold, as he deemed it, discovered; but the final transition was a flash of demoniac triumph, at having now got her completely into his toils, beyond his most sanguine expectations or his wildest hopes. While Edith, on her side, as soon as she had made the discovery that the *soi-disant* Mr. Henry—the *proved* villain, and Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars—the suspected bad man—were one and the same; felt such a reaction of courage, from supreme contempt, that she was now equal to facing any danger, moral or physical, from the high vantage ground which virtue always occupies when pitted against vice, and integrity against falsehood. Hastily recovering his presence of mind, and with it all his consummate and cold-blooded villany, the clever man took off his hat, made her a profound bow, and then, gliding forward in a sort of dancing-master second position, said—

"Miss Panmuir here! I confess I am surprised; for, notwithstanding the preference with which you have always honoured me, I fear the world, which never makes any allowance for a woman's *feelings*, will fasten upon you an indelible imprudence."

"The world! sir," replied Edith, haughtily, while her eyes and cheeks flashed with irrepressible indignation, "when it is fully acquainted, as it soon will be, with the long tissue of your hitherto only suspected villainies, will fasten upon *me* nothing but its sympathy for having escaped from your dastardly machinations."

"Leave the room, and take those brats away!" thundered

he, glaring at Mrs. Bousefield, while in an abortive grapple at his cravat, to loosen it, he gave it a tug that nearly strangled him. But Mrs. Bousefield neither winced nor moved, firmly convinced as she was of the timely arrival of the allied forces; as firmly convinced as Napoleon was at the Battle of Waterloo, that the Prussians were Grouché's corps; though, luckily for herself, with far more data. Therefore she coolly replied, folding her arms and taking her stand at the head of the sofa,—

"I shan't leave the room, nor I shan't take them poor dear children away; nor ham I going to leave my poor dear lady hin the state has hall your howdacious wishusness have brought her hint; hand still less, hon no haccount whatsoever, ham I going to leave such a lawless, good-for-nothink, hunprincipled limb has you hare, halone hand hunpertected with such a beautiful hand hinnocent young lady has that 'ere. Ere is a specimen," added she, pointing to poor Florence, "hof what you hare capable hof in that way; ho! hif poor dear Mr. Bousefield was but halive! hor hif I was but hable to do hit myself—whereof I have not got the strength hof a fly, being that weak hand that nervous that hany body might knock me down with a feather,—I'd soon serve you: has hall such good-for-nothink villands, who behaves so to a ooman, deserves to be served; for when they haint got no 'arts nor no consciences to feel with, they orght to be made to feel with their bones, by 'aving hof hevry one on 'em hin their skins broken; hand then, has Jezebel did, (!) I'd give em to the dogs, where they 'ad been going so long; for it is but right has the dogs should ave hall broken wittuls, poor dumb hanimals!"

Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was so taken aback, so perfectly astounded! at this unusually warlike piece of declamation on the part of Mrs. Bousefield, that for several seconds he could literally do nothing but stare at her and gasp; while she, knowing him now to be down (though he himself was not aware of that fact), felt her coward's courage rising, and was greatly inclined to "hit him again."

Most men, including good men,—nay, even the *best* men, are moral cowards, but all bad men are especial poltroons, therefore, the clever and much bepuffed Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, quailed even before the veracious vituperations of a Mrs. Bousefield, without, however, quite losing his *déplomb*; for, finding he could not get rid of this witness to their interview, he determined to outrage and humiliate Edith as much as possible before her.

“May I,” said he, turning to the former, with one of his sardonic sneers, “enquire—if it is not taking *too* great a liberty—Miss Panmuir, how you found your way into this little *rus in urbe* of mine?”

“Certainly, *not* knowing that it *was* yours,” replied Edith; “but this poor lady having fainted at Kensington Church, where I happened to go this morning with an old friend of my family’s, not unknown to you by name (Alciphron Murray)—we brought her home.”

This additional information of Murray having discovered Florence’s retreat, caused Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars to frown, sharply bite his lip, and actually stamp his foot; but, again rallying, and tightly folding his arms with the stern determination to “*see it out*,” he again turned to Edith, and said—

“Although, Miss Panmuir, you appear to be so *very sure* of enlisting the world’s sympathy for having followed *me* to the abode of my *mistress*, I doubt whether you can equally count upon that of the Duke of Liddesdale, though I am aware that he is one of the greatest spoonneys of modern times.”

“It is false!” cried Edith, indignantly, “for you know—you base, bad man!—that, were not Florence Wilmot your lawful wife, you would not have concealed and martyred her as you *have* done; and it seems that it was for *her* death, poor soul! that you were so willing to postpone your marriage with me for a few months, and *not* Lady Mammonton’s, which I then thought sufficiently horrible, little dreaming, at *that* time, what deeper depths of iniquity you were plunged into. But as for

your cowardly threats about the Duke of Liddesdale, you may spare yourself, sir, the trouble of carrying them into execution ; for long before you can communicate any calumnies to him, not only the Duke of Liddesdale, but the Duke of Liddesdale's mother, whom I have sent for, will be acquainted with what it seems *you* have never yet known—the TRUTH."

At this last piece of intelligence about the expected arrival of the Duchess of Liddesdale, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, foiled for the moment, actually hung his head, while Mrs. Bousefield, who had listened with her eyes, as well her ears, to all this, and had gleaned from it two things ; first, that there was a *bonâ fide* real live duke and duchess mixed up with Edith ; and, next, that Mr. "Enery," as he still was to her, had been positively paying his addresses to the former, as "a single man without encumbrances—*Ho! the 'orrible villand!*" now stepped forward and said, "I beg your pardon, 'um, but his it *posserble* that 'e hever 'ad the howdacious villany to make up to, hand purpose for a beautiful young lady hin your spear hof life, hand his poor dear wife still living!"

"Only last year," said Edith, in reply to Mrs. Bousefield's question, flinging at the same time, a look of withering contempt upon the cowering and abject figure of the *clever man* (?)

"Hand pray, mum," resumed Mrs. Bousefield, after duly throwing up her hands and eyes to the ceiling, in the most ex-communicatory horror! "may I make so bold has to hask what he called hisself, for these neferious pupposes, has I much doubt, hits being Mr. 'Enery?"

"No," replied Edith, in a loud, clear voice, "it was Mr. Henry Ponsonby Ferrara."

"What!" almost screamed Mrs. Bousefield, "the feller has writes hall them fine books hand plays, full hof senterment hand soft-soap!—Oh! the 'orrid, solemncholy, double-faced villand!"

Here the gentleman so designated, losing all control over himself, actually raised his foot to administer to the widow's

will—at least it was not to her pleasure ; but she dexterously avoided receiving this striking expression of his sentiments, by dodging behind the sofa, while he, growing still more infuriated by the defeat, seized Edith by the arm, his eyes glaring like a maniac, and swearing a terrible oath, said,—

“ If I hang for it ! your *friend* the Duke of Liddesdale shall have cause to remember that you have been here.” And, suiting the action to the word, in attempting to drag her forcibly out of her chair to the door, he so hurt her arm that she gave a faint scream, in which little Florence, as much from sympathy as from fear, joined ; whereupon Alp, springing from the sofa, and on Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, pulled him down, and pinned him to the ground with one huge paw, while, with his red tongue and glaring eyes, he panted defiance at him.

“ For Heaven’s sake ! some of you, call off this d—d dog, if you don’t want to see me torn to pieces !” cried the prostrate man piteously.

“ Har ! but suppose has that was just what we did want !” retorted Mrs. Bousefield stoically, “ hin has much has hit would be serving hof you pufectly right, hif hit was honly- for persuming to crown hall your hother villany, by laying a finger hon this ’ere beautiful young lady, to say nothink hof your hinfamous hunmanly threats. Blackguard ! I call you now to your face ! which his a comfort, as I’ve never got the chance to do hit before, hexcept behind your back, where hof course hit couldn’t have the same beneficial effect. That’s right Halp—there’s a good dog—keep him down, but don’t bite him for fear hany think so venomous might disagree with you, hor heven be the means of poisoning hon you.”

Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, whose terror was momentarily augmenting, to say nothing of his very uncomfortable and ridiculous position, now began to try the persuasive with his canine antagonist.

“ Poor Alp,—*poor* fellow ! there, that will do ; let me go—there’s a good dog.”

But Alp’s only reply to all these bland entreaties, was a low

growl, accompanied by a licking of the chops, as if getting his very fine and very sharp teeth into battle array.

"Barlow, I'll give you fifty pounds if you'll call off the dog."

"Who do you mean by Barlow! My 'usban *was* a 'usban! hand, therefore, gave me his name, which I haint got no cause to be hashamed hon, whatever your poor dear lady may have to howning hof yours; hand has for your fifty pounds, heven hif I war to seesich a thing belonging to yer, which I never 'ave yet, I should scorn to take hit, when your poor, dear wife his hobleeged to sell not honly the trinkets has she 'ad has a young lady, but heven to the Queen Helizabeth's *hair*-looms hof her famly, to get the commonest necessaries for herself han her poor dear children!—er-r-r-r-r! you good for nothink villand!—blackguard, I call you!"

Modestly waiving all allusion to these numerous compliments, the clever man replied in a voice that was at once the model of courtesy and humility,—

"I beg your pardon. Mrs. Bousefield, I meant; but you look so young that no wonder I sometimes mistake and give you your maiden name; but I'll give you a hundred pounds—pon my honour I will—if you'll call off this d—d dog."

"I don't want none hof your carneying, hand hif I do look young I'm not so green has to be corght by hany of your fly-fishing baits; hand has for your 'undreds, you may keep 'um for me; hand heven hif I could demean myself so far has to haccept hanythink hof the sort from you, has you make hit a promissary payment hon your *honour*! why, lawr! I should have so far to seek for hit that I fear has five times the sum would be consumed hin travelling hexpenses, hand throwing good money hafter bad, has the saying his."

Thus goaded, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars would have almost compounded for a bite from the dog, if he could have relieved his mind by hurling a hearty d—n at the widow, for pronouncing this inaugural address to his personal début in the infernal regions;

for, to a man of his stilted pomposity of character, and mock dignity of disposition, accustomed too, as he was, to be gorged with the garbage of claptrap adulation, there was something far more humiliating, and therefore more irritating, in the ludicrousness of his physical position, than even in this coarse and pitiless unmasking of all his vices, but, as invariably,—

“Pardon to the injured doth belong.”—

not only did Edith feel a touch of compassion for his at once mortifying and perilous situation; but she also felt, as she glanced at his poor unconscious victim on the sofa, that there was something horribly irreverend, not to say sacrilegious, in letting anything bordering on the ridiculous endure in the presence of this similitude of death, and under the very shadow of so great, though, for the time being, so mute a sorrow.” Therefore, lowering the sleeve of her dress, which Mrs. Bousefield had raised to rub her arm, she said, as she turned to him,—

“If, sir, you will promise me on the honour of a gentleman—for I believe your creed extends no farther—not again to presume to approach me, I will call the dog off; but remember, at the first intimation of the slightest infringement of this compact, it is very easy to set him at you again, and somewhat more effectually;” for from her recently acquired knowledge of his craft and his cowardice, she thought it quite necessary to throw out the latter hint.

“I give you my honour I will leave the house instantly, if you will call him off,” said he eagerly.

But that was not exactly what Edith wanted, as it was highly necessary for poor Florence’s sake, that he should be confronted with Mr. Wilmot and Murray. Luckily, just at that moment, she saw through the only half-drawn down French blind of a side window, the two latter, hurrying across the kitchen garden; so again repeating her question, merely to gain a few seconds more time, she said, “So then I may rely upon you?”

“I give you my oath, if you like it better.”

"Alp! Alp! here, poor fellow!" said she, lightly patting Florence. The next instant the dog had relinquished his hold, and bounded to his former post on the sofa. Once more free, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars sprang to his feet, and grinding his teeth, and shaking his clenched hand, seized his hat, about to rush out of the house, big with schemes of the blackest vengeance; but just as he had pulled open the drawing-room door, so violently as to be almost thrown back by the rebound, he was in reality pushed back more substantially by the stalwart form of Murray, who, collaring him, prevented his egress with one hand, while, having shut the door and kept his back against it, he barred its passage by holding up his stout oaken stick with the other.

"Hell and fury!" exclaimed Ferrars, livid with rage, and struggling desperately, but impotently, against Murray's Herculean strength,—*"a foul conspiracy!"*

"Most foul!" repeated Murray.

Mr. Wilmot, who on entering the room, had at once hastened forward to the sofa, and there kneeling beside his inanimate child, had bathed her in his tears, and embalmed her in blessings; so that his son-in-law only now, upon despairingly looking round for help, for the first time perceived him.

"Cowards!" muttered he, "two against one!"

"Nay, you don't state the matter fairly," said Murray—"two men against one fiend is surely not too much odds, especially as the sacred calling of one of the twain precludes his using all human weapons."

"Villain!" cried the other; "you forget that we are in a free country, and that every Englishman's house is his castle! by what authority dare you then enter mine, and threaten me in this cowardly manner?"

"*I*," replied Murray, first touching with his finger his own breast, and then pointing to Mr. Wilmot, "*I*, by the heaven-delegated authority of justice and humanity, *He* by the equally indisputable one of blood! for your victim is that old man's only child! are you answered now?"

On hearing this, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' upraised and threatening arm fell heavily and powerlessly by his side, like that of a corpse, while his head as suddenly drooped, and his pale eyes were raised fearfully over his blanched cheeks, as he slowly turned, with a muscular and tremulous motion of the jaw, his coward gaze on Mr. Wilmot, whose face he had never before seen, nor did he see it then, for it was hidden on his daughter's shoulder. But if the spoiler's cheek *did* blench, if his eye did pale, and his heart quail at the presence of the man he had so injured,—it was not with the terrible but salutary conscience-quake of remorse!—for as there are soils so parched and arid that not even a bramble can spring up in them, so are there souls so seared and calcined by sin, that not even the graceful weed of an unavailing regret can waive above their devastation, to show that better things *might*, had they been planted, have flourished there! No; this bad man cowered, because, having been thus suddenly despoiled of his leaden cloak of hypocrisy and his mumming mask of morality! he felt himself caught in his own springe, and toiled in his own snare; and there is no torture that a knave writhes under equal to that, by which the jugglery of fate compels him to take the fool's part of being *compassed* and secured.

"It appears," said Murray, eyeing the clever man with a mixture of ineffable contempt and disgust, "that Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' college reputation by no means belied him!"

A scowl and a sneer, was the only answer he vouchsafed to this remark.

* Mr. Wilmot who, after his first uncontrollable paroxysm of convicting feelings, had prayed himself calm, now raised his head, induced to do so by poor Alp's sympathizing and silent caresses.

"Go," whispered Edith to little Florence, through her own ill-suppressed sobs, "and kiss that gentleman, he is your grand-papa." The child, who had hitherto clung tightly to Edith, now relaxed her grasp, and attracted by Mr. Wilmot's benevolent

face (for children, like dogs, are great physiognomists) instantly advanced towards him, and placing her little hand on his, looked up in his face, and said timidly, but earnestly,—

“Grandpapa, will you kiss me?”

His only reply was to lift her up and press her to his heart; and after he had repeatedly kissed her, he said, struggling with his tears,—

“May God bless! and *guard you* my poor little darling!”

Master Henry, who had strong masculine notions upon equality of rights and participation, in an *inverse ratio*, now came forward from his hiding place also, and taking possession of Mr. Wilmot’s knee, which he clasped with both his arms, cried out, looking up at him,—

“If you are Flo’s grandpapa, you are mine too; so kiss Harry?”

A request that was instantly complied with by the poor hearted-stricken old man, who for several seconds pressed both his grandchildren convulsively to his bosom, as if trying to arrest a refracted, but fugitive ray of hope!

“Sir,” said Edith, gently, “your daughter is only in a swoon; and is it not fortunate that she will be spared a painful scene? and but awaken to the delightful consciousness of seeing you, and hearing your blessing!”

“I thank you, my dear young lady,” said he, putting down the children, and holding out his hand to her, “for reminding me, that even through our darkest trials, there is always *some* clear space of mercy! through which we can look up to heaven, and thank God! And now, sir,” added he, sternly, as he turned to Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, “who, and what are you? and when and where did you marry my daughter?”

“To answer your questions categorically, old gentleman,” replied that personage, with the most exasperating insolence, for the villain was again buoyantly in the ascendant; “first, in regard to who I am—a celebrity, therefore, of course unknown to you! next, in regard to what I am—a gentleman; therefore I

shan't stand any bullying ! thirdly, as to when I married your daughter—at no time ! fourthly, where did I marry her—nowhere ! I believe these were all your queries ; and now there's the door," concluded he, pointing to it in the most insolent manner, "and the sooner you transfer yourself to the outside of it, the better for yourself, and the more agreeable to me."

Mrs. Bousefield, who ever since the entrance of Murray and Mr. Wilmot, had been sobbing with a forty widow power, now exploded into a perfect hurricane of indignation !—

"Oh ! Mr. Wilmot, sir ! don't you believe him ! hof hall the howdacious whoppingest hof lies, heaven for *him* ! that his biggest ! for they was married hat Folkestone, by a clergyman hof the name hof Grant, when they fust 'loped hof, before they started hon their furrin tower, which I'm sure was hany thing but a tower of strength to her ! poor dear young lady ; hand when fust I come to her, last year, fearing has that 'orrid villand there might get hold hon it, and destroy hit, has he 'ave done her, she give me her marriage suttificut to take care hof, hand I *did* take special care hef hit, hand 'ave got hit safe hand sound, but not in this 'ouse, for I placed hit hin the 'ands hof my solicitors ; hand they his halso Barclay hand Perkins's solicitors, has Mr. Bousefield used tp 'ave hall our beer hand hale from them when we was hin business ; hand I honly wish as Barclay hand Perkins's men 'ad hold hof that 'orrid villand there, that they might serve him hout, has they did that there furrin ginral, who didn't deserve it, no not one 'arf so bad—er-r-r-r ! But lawr ! heaven long before I married poor dear Mr. Bousefield, I halways hated them turnip-faced, carroty whiskered men, they haint never no good, you may depend hon it."

At this mention of the safe custody of the marriage certificate, the headlong torrent of ungovernable passion swept away every landmark of prudence from the clever man, and though still under Murray's iron grasp, he shook his clenched hand, and stamped his foot at Mr. Wilmot, ordering him instantly to quit *his* house.

"Not," said the former, with calm determination, "till my daughter is able to leave it with me, and till the whole world is informed that she leaves it, and has lived in it as *YOUR WIFE*!"

"Stupid! idiotic! old fool!" hissed Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, now becoming actually rabid with impotent rage; "you seem to forget the admirable laws we live under, which so justly and so properly give to a husband, under all circumstances, the sole and unlimited control over his own wife; therefore attempt to remove her at your peril, old dotard!"

"I do not indeed forget; for who with a heart or a conscience *can* forget it," replied Mr. Wilmot; "not only the total want of all protection for married woman, which disgraces our civil code in this age of boasted progression, but the still greater blot on it, of the slave trade power over them, which it places indiscriminately in the strong hands of their too often unmanly masters.* Neither do I forget, that for the thousand murderous vices of which the law takes, and *can* take no cognizance, and for which public opinion can be the only moral police, how often that moral police is waylaid on its beat, and prevented coming to the rescue of the oppressed, by having its lantern puffed out by some counterblast of falsehood. It shall now be

* Upon this subject the Editor of "The London Journal," in No. 464, vol. XVII. of his excellent paper, has the following admirable remarks.—"We must persist in saying that before the position of women can be improved, they must be secured against ill-treatment by a judicious alteration in their legal position. They must be less the slaves of men than they are. A wife must be allowed to have property of her own—a husband must not be allowed to plunder his wife—her private purse must be protected as it is in France—and, above all, facilities for obtaining divorces must be multiplied. The old idea that marriage is a sacrament must be discarded, and the contract interpreted by the plain rules of common sense and business. We are satisfied that until this has been done, the position of women in these islands must remain degraded, and that all corrective legislation levelled against bad husbands will but serve to exasperate their vicious propensities, and, as a consequence, aggravate the already sufficiently miserable and unprotected condition of their wives."

my care to prevent this *contre temps* occurring as regards my poor martyred child ; so let me advise you, more for your own sake than for hers, not by further outrages to make matters worse than they already are."

The clever man, who, even in his most volcanic furies, had always a keen eye to his own interest, now began to think that it would be desirable, at all hazards, to escape, if but for a few hours, from Magnolia Lodge and the surveillance of Murray and Mr. Wilmot, were it only to put himself *en rapport* with his own especial press-gang of Blackiswhite and Co.—not for the purpose of table-turning, but for that of, if possible, turning the tables, by getting all sorts of garbled statements and counter-statements inserted in the papers, respecting his marriage with Florence, so that the "web of wiles," without even "one thread of candour," might puzzle the Lord Chancellor himself, if ever the matter came before him ; but, above all, in order to mystify Lady Mammonton in such an effectual manner, that the digestive organs of her credulity might be prepared to receive any amount of *friandises* in the way of falsehoods, which he might, when hard run, find it expedient to regale her with.

All this duly, though instantaneously, weighed, he advanced towards Mr. Wilmot, though still unreleased, and closely followed by Murray, and said—

"Upon reflection, I am willing to waive my prior rights as a husband in favor of yours—whatever you may choose to call them—as a father ; for, mind, your daughter, once another man's wife, the law allows you no longer any rights over her, as it very properly does not admit that a mother is any relation to her child. For, as in religion, all civilized nations only allow of one God, so the admirable law of England, in its ecclesiastical statutes, only recognizes ONE POWER, and that power is THE HUSBAND'S ! still, as I said before, I am ready to waive this, my just and legal authority, and leave you here for to-day ; but you surely cannot be so unreasonable as to want me to witness any more scenes ; so here is my card ; and, as you will now

know where to find me, of course you will not think of detaining me here by force."

"Certainly not," said Mr. Wilmot; "but I have one question still to ask you, your answer to which is of the most vital importance to me. I think you asserted, a short time ago, that you were a *gentleman*."

"SIR!" thundered Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, his eyes flashing forked lightning.

"Because," resumed Mr. Wilmot, "in *that* character I cannot reconcile your positive denial of ever having married my daughter, with your now strenuous insistence on your marital rights and conjugal power over her; which of these statements do you choose me to believe? for either will now answer my purpose equally well."

Here was a second ridiculous position this great man had been placed in that morning: but so little do we know at what we rejoice, or at what we tremble in this world, that, as he saw the smile, like a gleam of sunshine, that passed over Edith's face, at this *coup d'état* of Mr. Wilmot's, while Mrs. Bousefield was actually desecrating the Sabbath, by clapping her hands, and crying *bray-vo!* in the most indecorous manner, as if she had been at Sadler's Wells, and was witnessing the lady in red cotton velvet, strutting Statira to Master Muffinton's Alexander the Great. The clever man even felt grateful to a knock at the drawing-room door, which at this critical moment, served as a diversion in his favour. But the knock not being responded to, the door was presently opened, and Joe Roberts, putting in his head, made all sorts of telegraphic signs to Mrs. Bousefield; but she, signing back to say that she was particularly engaged at that moment, and could not come, and he not understanding the sign, which was no wonder, he next tried in a stage whisper, bounded on the right by his hand, and on the left by the drawing-room wall—

"Please marm, you're wanted; the furrin lady about poor Jack."

"Ho! very well, I'll come directly," said the widow; but, before she had got half the way across the room, Fraulein, with true German *sans gêne*, passed Joe, and made her way into the drawing-room, her elaborately ugly face shining with delight all over its high cheek-bones, like a card of new, flat, brass buttons, at the idea of the glad tidings she had to impart. Having bobbed her Medusa-like black ringlets in all directions, collectively, and individually, to the assembled group, she no sooner espied Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars (upon whom, in truth, no Medusa, fabled or real, could have produced a more petrifying effect!) notwithstanding which, with that truly Christian spirit of returning good for evil, which some victims are capable of to the last, her face again became more broadly *rayonnante*, its grotesque ugliness, of course, widening in proportion to the breadth of light thrown upon it.

"Ah! how ver goote of you," cried she, apostrophising her transfixed *friend*, and showing all her very red gums and very yellow teeth, *via* an extensive grin of delighted surprise, "ver, ver kint of you to coame here befores me, to tell to dese poor peoples de goot news dat you haves writtens to de governors of de convictions abouts dat poor boy—poor Jauque! Ah! shoakings! shoakings! I am nussings boat de goose-skins ven *I* tink of him."

"Well, well, yes, I have written and done all I could; but do, for Heaven's sake, get out of this place, and I will join you in a moment; just wait in the lane for me," hastily muttered the clever man, in an agony of conflicting terrors, looking and nodding at the window as he spoke, as much as to say, "There, there, make haste: *do go* at once."

But the more he motioned, and the more he muttered, the more Fraulein opened her large, truly oyster-looking eyes, and the more her German dulness lingered to ask an explanation—a logical solution of *why* she was to decamp in such haste? She, who had come armed to the teeth with shawls, clogs, and Berlin comforters for walking home; being convinced that she

should be asked to spend the day at Magnolia Lodge, and being equally determined to accept the invitation, she had no notion of relinquishing this *idée fixe* without at least a struggle to retain it. So, now advancing three steps farther from the door into the room, each of which steps were like so many nails driven with a sledge-hammer into the maddeningly-perplexed chaos of the clever man's brain, she said, in the most infuriating affectionate gentleness and German phlegm—

"Non, non ; I villis waits for you, since you coame so soon."

And as she spoke, her eye, for the first time, fell upon the reclining figure of Florence, which the group around the sofa had hitherto hidden from her view.

"Ah ! dat poor lady, how ill, how pales she looke ! Who is she ?"

"Mrs. Ponsonby Ferrars, that bold bad man's *wife*," said Edith, pointing at the latter—for she had heard the Duchess of Liddesdale say the year before, that she firmly believed Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had palmed off one of his mistresses as a German governess to Mrs. Piers Moncton.

"It is false ! it is not ! it cannots be true ! say it is nots true," shrieked the poor creature, seizing him by both lapels of his coat, and looking at him so intensely, and bringing her face so near to him that it might well have appalled ! a stouter and truer heart than his.

"Of course it's not," muttered the cowardly wretch.

"And these are his children, whom he would brand with infamy, as well as their mother !" added Mr. Wilmot.

"Nor that haint all neither !" cried Joe Roberts, now bursting into the room—for upon Fraulein's entrance, from the moment he had espied Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, he had remained glued to the door.—"For I'm sorry to say, marm, hif *he* is the person as you happlied to, to hinterest hisself about poor Jack, you got hold of the wrong sow by the ear ; for it haint likely that he—his hown hunnatrel father, who left the poor boy to starve from his birth, hafter doing the same by his mother afore him, and

never give him a single thing with the exception of one bad sovereign, hunder the pertence of charity, which it was all along of passing that 'ere bad money that the poor lad got ruined, hand sent hout of the country. So 'taint likely has he'd hintercede to do hanythink to help him, onless indeed hit was to help him hup the ladder to the gallows, arter 'aving shoved him so well along the road to hit; honly hit's a pity but what he was there fust to receive him; but for that matter in this world, heven the gibbet don't get hits due—more's the pity! for if it did, honest folks would have a better time on it."

At this last blow, poor Fraulein uttered no further doubts or questions; she only stared wildly as if all sense save that of suffering had fled, as for some seconds she kept writhing her interlaced fingers in and out; and then walking over to the sofa, she dropped a low curtsey before the inanimate Florence, and pressing both her hands upon her heart, as if to keep it within its proper boundary, she said, in a broken and husky voice—

"Oh, mine Got! I beg your pardons, poor lady, but I did nots, indeed I did nots know! and de poor Garman girls vill now go to vhere dere is no more sins, and vhere she take all de punishments of vot she 'ave dones—but he did so promise to make me his vifes!"

She then turned slowly away, and walked solemnly and abstractedly forward, like a person walking in their sleep, till she came near Ferrars, who was standing with his arms tightly folded, and his eyes doggedly fixed upon the ground, and the corners of his mouth elongated downwards till they gave him a look of the most revolting cynicism.

"May Got forgives you! you bad mans; for de hells you have made for many, and for de hells you sends me to. Mine poor mooter! mine poor mooter! but Lady Moncton pay to her what is owe to me—yes, yes, all dat is owe will be paid, and Got will repay you! so I vill not leave you no curse beyond your MEMORY! he is de bad man's vorst curse!"

With this she left the room, and the next moment was seen rushing across the lawn with a sort of supernatural speed.

"For Heaven's sake!" cried Murray, seizing his hat, and turning to Joe, "let us go after that poor creature. She is evidently in no state to be left to herself."

Mr. Wilmot turned his face and groaned under these repeated overflows of his cup of misery. Edith and the widow were sobbing violently—the latter now in all sincerity; while the poor children had got up into a corner, pale and frightened, where they were tightly holding each other's hands, and poor Alp was looking from one to the other of the assembled group, with an occasional little low whine, and that nervous twitching of the ears which is an infallible symptom of canine mental inquietude, particularly when accompanied with tremulousness.

No sooner had Murray and Joe Roberts cleared the outer gate, than Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, taking advantage of his recovered liberty, unfolded his arms, snatched up his hat, and not staying to interrogate the glass as to its adjustment, said—

"A *pleasant* morning I have had of it!" and the next minute, after furiously slamming to the drawing-room door, he was seen whizzing across the lawn, like an express train, and as soon as he had banged the garden-gate after him, the retreating sound of his carriage-wheels and his horses' hoofs (not his own, as he seldom walked) was heard, and when their echoes had died quite away, every one (with the exception of Florence) in that little room breathed more freely, including the dog.

Mrs. Bousefield, as might be expected, was the first to find, what she so seldom lost, her tongue, which she attuned to the following jubilation:

"Well, *that's* a good riddance, hat hall events. Hand now, sir, hif you please" (turning to Mr. Wilmot), "I'll try and get my poor dear lady hup to bed; hand what a *mussy*, to be sure, to think that it should 'ave so 'appened that she *was* hin this state, not to 'ave 'eard and seen hall that 'orrid villand's hadditional goings hon—*blackguard*! I call him—er-r-r-r! Hif *my* 'usban 'ad honly served me the 'arf hof it, I think I'd 'ave squeeged him down hinto the smallest pint pot that hever was made for the largest 'ouse hof business!"

"I had better go into another room," said Mr. Wilmot, "for fear, in moving her, you might rouse her, and suddenly seeing me should have a fatal effect upon her."

"Not the least fear of that, sir. I now know the *process* of one of these here bouts so well, that *praps* she won't come out of 'er till twelve or one o'clock to-night, and *praps* not even then; for I 'ave known them last for fifteen to sixteen hours."

"If you are quite sure of that, I will carry her up to bed myself."

"You may, sir, with *perfect* safety."

And the old man lifted his long lost child, his stray lamb, gently in his arms; and her almost impalpable weight preached him another sermon upon the lightness and vanity of all human ties! Still, as he raised his streaming eyes to Heaven, gratitude was their chief expression; and, in truth, he *was* silently thanking God for allowing the last breaker of the stormy sea, on which he had so long been tossed, to roll back to him even this precious fragment of the wreck!

"Will you," said Edith to Mrs. Bousefield, "have the goodness to let me know when Mrs. Ferrars is in bed, and I will go up to her?"

"I'm sure, mum, you're very kind, very much so; but *do* pray *heat* somethink *fust*, for, like myself, you'll be *that* weak hand *that* nervous that anybody might knock you down with a feather."

Edith promised Mrs. Bousefield that she would endeavour to avoid that catastrophe, and little Florence said to her, as soon as Mr. Wilmot had carried her mother out of the room, preceded by Mrs. Bousefield, to show him the way, and Alp bringing up the rear,—

"Will you come up to the nursery and see my other little brother?—he is called Horace, after grandpapa."

"With pleasure, dear; but I think this little brother, or I suppose I ought to call him your big brother, had better stay

down here, for fear of making a noise, and suddenly awaking your poor mamma."

But Master Henry, who was not more fond of his own society than other people were, at the bare mention of such a thing instantly got up a *strike*; the terms of which were, that if he was allowed to go up-stairs he'd be *good*, but that if he was *made* to stay down there, he'd *kick up such a row*! that it should set Alp barking, all the cats mewling, and all the maids scolding. So, not choosing to risk the horrors of war, thus graphically set before her, Edith said with a peaceful smile, which was nevertheless more *bright* than Cobden!—

"Well, then, if you promise to be *very* good you may come."

On opening the nursery door Edith was greeted by the poor baby's fretful wail, which Marlow the nurse was in vain trying to hush, from the usual nursery *répertoire*. Upon the opening of the door he turned his heavy eyes towards it, and upon seeing Edith he slightly raised his little head. As she approached him the chain she wore round her neck attracted his attention, and as he stared at it, his wailing for a moment ceased.

"Poor little fellow!" said Edith; "he looks very ill."

"Yes, ma'am, I think he is cutting another double tooth," said the nurse.

"I should fear it was something more than his teeth by the look of his eyes. Had you not better send for a doctor?"

"Why we expect Mr. Rushbrook, the doctor, here every minute, ma'am; he said he did not like his looks yesterday, but he could not tell for a certainty what was the matter with him till he saw him again to-day."

"Poor little thing! Will baby come to me?" said Edith, holding out her arms to him. The child made no opposition, so she took him in her arms and walked up and down the room with him. He seemed either lulled or relieved by the change, as his moaning ceased, and he kept his large, heavy eyes steadily fixed on her face, and the rippling, golden braids of her richly-

wreathed hair; while Master Henry held tightly on to the skirt of her dress, as he would not for the world be out of any sort of procession that was going; only occasionally diverging from it to dart into divers mysterious strongholds of the nursery, and bring forth, now a brick, now a top, and then a tin grenadier, or a ninepin; all of which, by way of consolation, he kindly tried to cram into the poor baby's mouth, which, of course, irritated the little sufferer into a fresh paroxysm of screaming, in the midst of which Mr. Rushbrook arrived.

"I'm sorry to say, ma'am," said he, after having told the nurse to take the baby from Edith and bring it to the window, where he had raised its eyelids, looked at its tongue and felt its pulse, "you have been doing rather an imprudent thing, for I now see that it is decided scarlet fever that this poor little fellow has."

"Good gracious!" said Edith, turning to Marlow, "will you have the goodness to go down stairs directly and tell *all* the servants that when the Duchess of Liddesdale, whom I am expecting every minute, comes, *on no account* to let her in, but say from me, Miss Panmuir, that she is not wanted here now, and that I will either write or go to her this evening; but, *mind, be sure they don't let her come in.*"

A lord! or a lady! and still more a duke! or a duchess! being among the few things that can pump up *empressement* and civility, from the Artesian well of our national bearishness, Mr. Rushbrook, who on his first entrance had viewed Edith (more especially from her wondrous beauty) in the same light he had always done the mistress of the house, at this magic jingling of a ducal coronet, now stepped forward, bowing almost to the very ground, and pantomimically washing his hands, as he said,—

"Madam, if you will allow *me*, I will station myself at the gate to warn her Grace of the infection, which I am most deeply grieved to think *you*, madam, should have run the risk of."

"Oh, no, thank you, for that would frighten her; besides, I

don't wish her to know that the scarlet fever is here, for then I know she would be frightened on *my* account, and would, I'm sure, come in to take me away, which could do *me* no good, and might be the means of her taking it too. As for me, the mischief is already done if mischief there is; but, as we are equally in God's hands, everywhere, under all circumstances, I cannot say that I feel the slightest alarm; though, of course, I would not have willingly tempted the danger, had I known of its existence."

"Well, madam, I'm sure I don't know which to admire most, your courage or your genuine piety." But as Mr. Rushbrook was determined to have it to say that he had once in his life spoken to, nay, more, rendered an important service! to a Duchess! he insisted upon being at the gate to receive her, lest the servants should make any blunder; and to achieve this point he promised Edith faithfully that her Grace should *not* come in, and should *not* know that the scarlet fever was in the house."

When Mrs. Bousefield returned to tell Edith that Florence was in bed, great was her *retrospective* consternation! on hearing that the baby had the scarlet fever, to think of the danger poor dear Mr. Bousefield and the "six dear infants" *might* have ran, had they been there to incur it! after which she was profuse in her hopes that Edith would escape it, and that "that good-for-nothink, 'orrid, howdacious, villand hof a Ferrars might 'ave *corght* hit; but, no, no fear hof *that*, for the Devil halways took care hof his hown, hand very right, too; hand hit was a pity, has those that himitated him so close hin hother respects did not foller his *egzample* hin that too."

Just as Edith was going into Florence's room Mr. Rushbrook returned, his stature apparently augmented at least two inches by his interview with the Duchess of Liddesdale.

"Well, madam," said he, "her Grace is gone, and hopes to see you this evening."

"Thank you: I'm so glad she did not persist in coming in, which I was afraid she would do."

"Why, to tell you the *truth*, madam, I found it necessary to tell a little *fib*, in order to prevent her Grace coming in, which she was evidently bent upon doing, so I told her you had gone home, for I thought anything better than risking the health of *two* such ladies."

"Dear me! I hope she won't go to our house and find that I am not there," mused Edith. But never being in the habit of dwelling long upon her own exclusive concerns, the interests of poor Florence now soon put them to flight; and knowing that there was no electric telegraph for disseminating news in a country, and more especially in a suburban neighbourhood, like a surgeon-apothecary, she took Mr. Rushbrook aside, before entering Florence's room, and gave him a *résumé* of her clandestine marriage; telling him, also, her real name, and the villainous manner in which Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had behaved to her, and that the old gentleman he would find with her was Mr. Wilmot, her father, whose admirable preaching he had no doubt heard, or at least heard of.

"Yes, surely madam, surely, and the lady I have been attending as Mrs. Henry is Mrs. Ponsonby Ferrars, the wife of that very clever and highly *talented* man!" (A word for which the individual so designated would have knocked the speaker down, had he heard it; as he, the "highly talented man," modestly considered himself the greatest genius of modern, or any other times.)

"He had far better have had a little less cleverness, and a little more conscience; and a little less talent, and a little more principle," said Edith, coldly.

"Oh, you are severe, madam, we must make allowances for genius, you know."

"I never have, and never can admit, that genius should be a charter for vice; on the contrary, as it presupposes superior intelligences, and a higher and clearer order of mind, it renders those in whom the Creator has kindled such Promethean lights doubly responsible; for "to whom much is given, from them shall much be required."

"Oh, certainly, madam, certainly; but still ——" and not knowing exactly how to finish the sentence, as a practical illustration of the word *still*, the doctor moved on.

On feeling Florence's pulse, he shook his head, and, in answer to Mr. Wilmot's anxious and inquiring looks, he said—

"It would be wrong to deceive you, sir; Mrs. Ponsonby Ferrars (for he had the good taste to soothe the poor father's ear, by giving her her real name in full) *may* regain her consciousness upon coming out of this, say at the expiration of six or seven hours more; but I greatly fear that it will only be the flickering of the flame before the lamp goes out. However, I may be mistaken, for while there's life there's hope."

Luckily for him, at this supreme moment, Mr. Wilmot's hopes had never been set on, or garnered in life. And when the man of pills had gone, and the father knelt with that fair girl beside the departing spirit of his child, which now hovered like a star between heaven and earth,—whilst a red ray from the setting sun streamed in through the half-closed shutter of that silent room, and touched into glory, like an Ithuriel's spear, the silver locks of the old man and the golden ones of the young girl—the spot became hallowed ground, for the group seemed that of a patriarch consigning back to an angel the young spirit of the child which the Eternal had lent him.

* * * * * *

It was late in the evening before Murray returned, he looked haggard and fatigued, when Edith went down to meet him.

"Well?" said she.

"Too late!" rejoined he, in answer to this laconic interrogation, as he flung himself on one side of the sofa and his hat on the other; "we could not overtake her; but suspecting from her wild and distracted looks that the poor creature had made for the river, I hastened to the Serpentine, through Kensington Gardens, but was only in time to see her lifeless body taken into the receiving-house. She had thrown a small mother-of-

pearl *souvenir* on the margin of the river, with every leaf torn out of it but one, on which was scrawled in pencil—

"Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars will not make of me his wife; but I can make of myself a corse. He tell me to read J. J. Rousseau; and Rousseau say, 'BY RENDERING LIFE INSUPPORTABLE, GOD ORDERS ONE TO QUIT IT.' I go, now, for to obey God's orders.

"ADELAIDA GOTHEKANT."

"Poor creature! poor creature!" said Edith, covering her face with both her hands, as she added, "God forgive that wretch, what a hell of crimes he has to answer for! and I, how can I ever be sufficiently thankful for having escaped such a fiend!"

"Amen," responded Murray.

* * * * *

As Mr. Rushbrook had foretold, Florence regained her consciousness about midnight. She was too near that brighter and better world to let anything, even the hitherto closest ties of this, ruffle that calm serenity of eternal peace which her poor riven heart had so long implored, and which she was now beginning to inherit. She recognized her father as God's greatest and crowning mercy; and her last silent prayer was to the Saviour to thank him for it. The clock of the old church had just tolled ONE—night and morning had had their momentary meeting and their eternal parting—and so was it with the spirit of Florence Wilmot and its earthly tabernacle; but it soared buoyantly up to its celestial *Home!* for its wings were a GOOD MAN'S BLESSING AND A FATHER'S PARDON!

* * * * *

The next morning, like a tender husband as he was, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars sent to Magnolia Lodge to inquire after her, and had at length the satisfaction of hearing that his great work was finished!—THAT HIS WIFE WAS DEAD!

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION XVIII.

"In divite intelligentur superbi: Judæorum ignorantes Dei justitiam, et suam volentes constituere——."

Augustin Quarst. Eran., lib. II. 88.

"Love is a jest, and friendship is but a name."—*Goldsmith.*

* * * * *

"To sing for silly souls
With a supplication
And a confutation
Without replication,
Having delectation
To make exclamation,
In his debellation
With a (Jewish) fashion
To subvert our nation."

Slightly altered from Jon. Skelton's lines to Sir Thomas Moore.

THERE, amid his "Paradise of Dainty Devices," the Right Honorable Issachar Benaraby was sitting alone in his library, leaning back in an exceedingly luxurious library chair; his right leg crossed over his left—for even when alone he kept up the good habit of always putting his best leg foremost. Upon the whole, we are sorry to say that "the Great Benarabian Hebrew Point *Controversy*," (which was as yet *undisputed*) did not progress with its author's usual *vivida vis anima*. In truth he himself felt—for he was too shrewd not to do so—that as far as this mighty work had yet proceeded, with the slight variation of the *title* of the production, what Holinshed, in his Chronicle,

churlishly but truly remarks of Heywood's parable of "The Spider and the Fly," might with equal justice be said of "the Great Benarabian Hebrew Point Controversy"—viz., "one also hath made a booke of the '*Hebrew Points*,' wherein he dealeth so profoundlie and beyond all measure of skill, that neither he himselfe that made it, neither aine one that readeth it, can reach into the meaning thereof." But Mr. Benaraby had a theory, which oft-repeated practical experiences had converted into a theorem,—that nothing was to be done with English people *without* ; but everything *by* bullying them ; so "Pooh !" exclaimed the honourable gentleman, after reading over the last page of his hieroglyphics ; "I am a fool to trouble myself about discrepancies and unintelligibilities, since I have only to keep steadily in mind (on a larger scale) the anecdote of Bruce, who, when somebody ventured to express a doubt as to the veracity of one of his travellers' tales, went to him with a raw beef-steak and said, "Sir, you'll either swallow *that* or fight me ;" so all I have to do is to get a sufficient number of raw steaks (and the rawer the better) from *my* fat bulls of Basan, ready for the 'British Public,' and let them look to it if they don't swallow them !—that's all. Though it is a dear good old granny of a Public too, for ever since the boy Isaac Newton used to tie candle-ends to the tails of his kites at night, which that dear old lady took for comets !—farthing rushlights do her just as well, *provided* they are but *puffed* sufficiently high, and adventured amid a proportionate degree of darkness. The only thing is, to amalgamate and blend one's materials well ; *fusion* is the grand secret of all things in nature, animate, and inanimate, from cookery down to coxcombry, from love down to liberty (!), and of politics as a *whole*, down to the detail of parties." And he got up and walked to the glass, and as he adjusted his ebon ringlets, declaimed (his own reflected image doing duty for the poet's Medora) these exquisite lines—

"Medora idola mia! fra questa frondi
Fra quest' erbe novelle, e questi fiori

Odi come sussara,
 Dolci scherzando, una leggera auretta
 Che all'odorate piante,
 Lieve fuggendo, i più bei spiriti invola
 E nel confuso errore,
 Forma da mille odori, un solo odore !”

“By Jove! flowers and perfumes remind me of my gardens, which so far resemble the hanging ones of Babylon, that I fear they also must be *suspended* till I can again take office.” And he drew forth, from a chaos of “Bills,” “Petitions,” “Minutes,” “Reports,” “Speeches,” “Addresses,” “Prospectuses,” “Resolutions,” and tape-tied “Drafts,” never meant to draw!—an elaborate plan for a sort of oriental horticultural nightmare, of “no mean mystery,” comprising parterres, compartments, traylor-work, knots, labyrinths, lanterns (not of the House of Commons), embossments, dedals, cabinets (which he could arrange and uproot at his pleasure), close walks (which there are in all cabinets), galleries, pavilions, porticoes, relieves of topiary, and hortulan architecture; rocks, grottoes, cryptæ, precipices, piscines, mounts, ventaducts, gazon theatres, artificial echoes! (a most essential piece of machinery to all political characters), automata and hydraulic music, and fountains, jets d’eaux, and cascades without number. Having wandered through this other theoretical maze of his, the right honourable gentleman was reposing (his imagination) “in a cool grot,” when the door was thrown open and—

“Lord Assfleece and Sir Cæsar Coakington” were announced (for the latter had been be(k)nighted on the advent of the Redby Ministry, and the meteoric flash of the Attorney-Generalship); but as the worthy conclave, in order to be ready for the dignity of office at a moment’s notice, had left off the “old fellows” and “old boys,” that used to constitute their greetings, the Attorney-General now advanced with all the stateliness of what had been, and therefore, what might be again, and holding out his hand, said—

"How are you, my dear Benaraby? I hope we don't interrupt. Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the Attorney-General, "I thought perhaps, my dear fellow, you *might* have been busy studying Burke's 'SHORT ACCOUNT OF A SHORT ADMINISTRATION,' alias a brief account of a *Burked* Administration!"

While the peer, previous to greeting the host, turned round to the *chief butler*, as he was about to close the door, and said—"Just bring me a glass of Seltzer water, will you."

"Interrupt me! not in the least, my dear Coakington; for I'm like the present ministry, doing nothing."

"Ah! a precious set, are they not!" laughed Coakington, shewing all his very fine teeth, as lifting up the skirts of his coat, he sank back in an easy chair.

"Oh! disgusting! I think of proposing to-morrow night, in the House, by way of the *other* extreme to 'The Juvenile Delinquency Bill,' that the present Administration adopt, as their official insignia, the old Roman S.P.Q.R.; which, having done duty so long for Senatus Populus Que Romanus, will do equally well to express Such Poor Queer Rogues! bad cooks all, devilled Turkey being the *only* plat à leur portée!"

"Ha! ha! ha! Hear! hear!"

"They say," resumed Benaraby, plunging both his hands into the very depths of his trouser pockets, as he stood with his back to the fireless grate, "that Sir Robert Cotton rescued the original Magna Charta from the hands of a tailor, who was just about to cut it up for measures; but *these* incapables are always cutting it up in their ridiculous measures!"

"Clearly, my dear fellow!" re-grinned Coakington; "and things will never be right till we get back, and *then* I advise you to strike while the iron is hot, and try and get a bill passed making the Chancellorship of the Exchequer a permanent thing; as that model king, Harry the Eighth, did, by conferring it on Lord Berners for life."

"No, no," rejoined Benaraby, shrugging his shoulders and protruding his lips, as he elevated his eyebrows; "*that* might be inconvenient, as preventing one's being Premier."

"Ah! I forgot that," laughed Coakington. "Then with this clause—'to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, till such time as it may inflate into the Premiership.' Ha! ha! ha!"

"I say, old fellow," cried Lord Assfleece, who was not proud! and therefore adhered to his *commoner* style of elocution, "as you are a literary cove, and all that sort of thing, I want you to do a little job for me."

"Your lordship forgets I'm no longer in office," bowed the ex-minister, with one of his most razor-like smiles, which, though it did not cut the block, nearly took the whiskers off the Attorney-General—he laughed so heartily.

"Oh! I don't mean any ministerial job," resumed the peer; "it's a sort of newspaper thing I want you to do for me."

"Your lordship's memory is still at fault, not to recollect that I have ceased to be a *leading article*, so should make no figure even in a newspaper," sneered the host.

"Oh! hang it! you don't understand; *this* is what I want," and as he spoke he kept poking the point of his cane with great energy horizontally into Mr. Benaraby's carpet, to the great detriment of that piece of furniture: "you know it is the fashion now to make histories, and romances, and things, for the peerage, and about the landed gentry—and—"

"The fact is," broke in Coakington, "he wants you to *Burke* him! Ha, ha, ha!"

"No I don't," matter-of-factly the young gentleman; "I only want you to write something about me and my father, beginning like all the rest of them—'This noble family is descended,' &c., &c., &c.—"

"On the contrary, my dear fellow," again interposed Coakington; "I think it should be, 'this noble family has *ascended*,' considering that *you* are the first peer."

"Oh! *only* about you, and your father; nothing about your grandfather?" sneered Benaraby, who at all times affected to hold the noblest English blood and oldest names in supreme contempt; for *he* thought—

Upstart each name, that Doomsday Book discloses,
Compared with *his*—old as the book of Moses.

"Well, I don't know much about my grandfather," modestly replied his lordship, pulling his right ear; "but you know you can say my *father* sat in three different parliaments as member for his own county; and—and that he had a clear rental of £132,000 a-year."

"A clear rental of £132,000 a-year," repeated Mr. Benaraby, dipping his pen into the ink, and making a note of that *great* fact; "and his son—but," continued he, looking up full in the face of that brilliant result of the elder Malden—"I think you had better marry before I attempt your biography; and then, perhaps, I may be able to say of you as another chronicler said of the son of Lord Shaftesbury—Cooper, Lord Shaftesbury, you know, the author of 'The Characteristics!'"

"No, I don't."

"Ah, well, that is very characteristic of *you*. But he said of that young gentleman, after concluding his panegyric on his father,—'little is known of this gentleman, except that he continued the family.'"

"Of course I don't mean to discontinue it."

"Glad of it," said Benaraby, "for it would be a thousand pities that the art of supplying the peerage with such luminaries, like the art of painting on glass, should be lost."

"Especially," laughed Coakington, "since both productions are equally liable to be cracked."

But the ex-Minister, without moving a muscle of his imperturbable countenance, and still addressing himself to the Attorney-General, added—"And with regard to the *present* representative of the Maldens, you remember AUSONIUS' EPIGRAM?—

"*Dum dubitat Natura Marem
Faceretoré Puellam,
Factus es ó Pulcher penè
Puella Puer.*"

"Well, I think we might bring it in with considerable effect, eh?" And again the two Talents laughed long and loud, to the great mystification of the new peer, who did not exactly see the joke, and might not have thought it any, if he had.

"Hang me!" cried Lord Assfleece, getting very red, especially at the tips of his ears, "if I don't believe you two d——d fellows are laughing at me."

"Nothing like Church and State! my lord; that's right, always cherish an *orthodox* creed," rejoined Benaraby, looking askance at Coakington; who as soon as he had done laughing, said, while he narrowly investigated the state of his nails,—
"Have you seen Lord Redby lately?"

"Not for four or five days."

"Ah, I saw him since that: he came into the Carlton on Saturday, while I was there. I didn't think he was looking well."

The fact was, that although Lord Redby, from enjoying the fruits of a life-long, well-merited respect and admiration, could not be easily unrespected, or unadmired, still he was in some measure reaping the odium, not to say the ridicule, of having selected such an unwise saw—though a *very modern instance!*—as Benaraby, for his chief tool in his *débüt* at cabinet-making; for though if a man selects bad tools for an important enterprise, and yet nevertheless succeeds in it, *then* is his glory all the greater—like that of Mr. Hobbs when he succeeded in opening Chubb's impregnable lock with the crooked point of a rusty nail!—for this reason, that to achieve great things with small resources, or by indifferent means, always has the air of a Hercules smiling in conscious power at what lesser mortals deem insurmountable obstacles. But just in proportion as success gilds everything, so does failure mire all things; and people now shrugged their shoulders, and asked, "What *could* Lord Redby have expected, when he made such a phizzig as Benaraby the pivot of his cabinet? but had that cabinet but stood its ground, then it would have been—"Wonderful man!

Lord Redby!—showed his grasp and reach of intellect, and his mental chemistry, in choosing Benaraby; for he saw, through the tinsel and motley of the mountebank, the prodigious stamina! and acumen of the man!” And for those who could see behind results into realities, Lord Redby, despite its failure, was still right in his choice; for every market should be supplied according to its demands; and such, in each age, are widely different. In the days of the Borgias for instance, the science sought, was for a liquid capable of discharging the natural darkness from human hair; in our day, its antipodes, for dying white hair black is the marvel in requisition; and in the Elizabethan era, not a fine head of hair but a fine wig was the desideratum coveted: and so, in like manner, Mr. Benaraby, as no doubt Lord Redby perceived, had just in him the very stuff necessary for modern traffic; for there was in his character what Jeffrey attributes to Richardson’s novels—namely, a strong “artificial reality,” which suits these times of Brummagem public-weal enthusiasm, infinitely better than genuine reality could do; for what is not understood cannot be appreciated. In short, with a few of the slightest possible alterations in what painters call the ordonnance of the picture, Lamartine’s portrait of Necker, in the former’s “History of the Constituent Assembly,” would have done for Mr. Issachar Benaraby’s; for the latter, like the French financier, had also “a confident eye, a close, and not ungracious mouth, foreign features, in which (Mosaic) gravity struggled with French shallowness, self-satisfaction, disdain for others, affected good-nature, feigned modesty,” *no*—his impudence at least was genuine!—“the attitude of a servant who protects his master; a look that canvassed for esteem; . . . an equivocal philosopher who accepted the caresses of (*Judaism*) while kneeling to the state religion; a visible intoxication of sectarian popularity; . . . a parade of charlatanism, which dwelt with ostentation on his slightest acts, public or private; an advertisement of virtue; a part of perpetual indecision, between the loyal subject, the infatuated parvenu, and the popu-

lar man of faction ;—such was the exterior, and such the man ; original type of the politicians of this doctoral, self-sufficient, and supercilious school."

"He undertook subjects in which politics and administration were connected with literature. His (brilliant) and emphatic eloquence affected the coruscations of Cicero, without, however, possessing their fascination ; the words—virtue, public good, agricultural interest, coalescion with free trade, municipal reform, progressing with the times, and love for the people, sanctified his books in the eyes of the financiers ; while his superficial knowledge of commercial and administrative economy, imposed upon men of letters."

"Well, I say, old fellow, you'll do that for me, won't you ?" said Lord Assfleeceem, addressing the host, and returning to the charge.

"Oh ! the inequalities of human destinies !" exclaimed Benaraby. "Talk of the division of labour, indeed ! it is *not* divided ; it is *all* removed from the hands of one, to be heaped upon the shoulders of another. Lord Redby made, or got the Queen to make, which is all the same thing, a peer of you ; but you ask me—poor, humble mortal that I am, to undertake the work of the gods, and make a man of you ! Let me see," continued he, seating himself at the table, and scratching down a few sentences on a piece of foolscap, "I'm not very well up in natural history, but I believe animals that live in shells are called *testaceous mollusca*—not testy mollicoddles, mind !—but, then, you are just out of your shell, so we must go on to the next stage, called the *acephala*, or animal without a head ; and so, by degrees, we shall get on to the Assfleeceem ! or animal with a coronet ; which latter article possesses the same advantage as the ladies' bonnets now in fashion—namely, that it may be, and most frequently is, worn without a head."

"Oh, don't ! you'll kill me !" screamed Coakington, holding his sides.

"No; now pray don't think of doing anything in the dying way, my dear Coakington," said the host, walking over to him, and pushing him back into his chair, "for a coroner's inquest would be most outrageously inconvenient to me just now; and, besides, the idea of a fellow sitting upon my friend the Attorney-General's body! it would look exactly as if, because we were out of office, we could not afford a *seat* between us!"

"By-the-bye," said Coakington, suddenly checking his laughter, "talking of coroner's inquests, those are two strange stories about Ponsonby Ferrars, in the papers this morning."

Oh, if that great man could but have heard those two important events of his life—the getting rid of a tenacious wife, and a troublesome mistress, at one felicitous swoop—merely alluded to in a "by-the-bye," with his most intimate friends; could he have believed his ears or his identity? But, alas! so it is in this worst of all possible worlds, from the greatest to the meanest amongst us, the particular grain that makes or mars our equilibrium, or secures or subverts one individual gravitation, is still but an inconsequential and unimportant grain to others (including our best friends) which may blow hither, thither, or whither it listeth, for aught they care.

"Ah! about his marriage," responded Benaraby, carelessly looking at his boots; "it seems the old father made him marry the girl on her death-bed; he was uncommonly lucky, I think, to get rid of his mate and his marriage so easily all at once."

For such was the dastardly and false account the clever man had had inserted in all his own special organs of the press, and their name was Legion; and the tragedy of poor Adelaida, he had had (as will be seen) equally garbled, so as to redound to his credit.

"And the other historiette," resumed Coakington, "about that poor German girl; two things in it, I own, surprise me; first, that a man like Ferrars could inspire such a romantic attachment" (for men are all sceptics as to other men's powers

of attraction), "and, secondly, and most of all, am I surprised that Ferrars should have so virtuously resisted her infatuation for him; for none of us ever suspected him of being a Joseph."

"Ah! well," said Benaraby, projecting his lips, and caressing his chin with his forefinger and thumb, "a Joseph is just about what I should think he was, on this particular occasion; for I have a picture of Mrs. Potiphar (in my mind's eye)," added he, "and she was skinny, scraggy, awkward, cowish in every thing but her breath; no points (not even Hebrew ones!)—bad style of woman altogether. Depend upon it, any of *us* would have behaved as well."

"What! all throughout?" laughed Coakington. "How about the corn in Egypt? Eh! you dog," added that gentleman, giving the Ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer a poke in the ribs with as little remorse as if he had been only a sack of flour.

"Well, sir," replied the latter, with great solemnity, drawing up to his full height, and opening his eyes widely all over his companion, "THERE IS STILL CORN IN EGYPT!" After which he added hastily and à propos de bottles—for no man had a happier knack of giving a subject the *sack*, when he wished to get rid of it—"Heard anything of Kieseroff lately? I hope he is in France, for, though he detested Macon (the wine) with all the energy which that execrable fluid deserves, and which his great gastronomic genius was capable of bestowing upon it, still, to carry out the doctrine of compensations, the gardener of a Madame somebody—Hazel or Schlegel, or some such name, who has a château at Macon (which, by-the-by, should be called Castle Cholera!) has just discovered what has long been deemed an agricultural impossibility—namely; that cruffles may be cultivated; and has actually succeeded in producing a large crop in her garden; for it would appear, that like all clever things, whether animal or vegetable, they being of the cryptogamic genus, are parasites, requiring *humus* of a special character, such as a substratum of chesnut, or oak-leaves, mixed with an argillo-calcareous soil. By Jove! I've a great

mind to try them at Babylonminton;" (the right honourable gentleman's newly-purchased estate)—"but *foi—not d'honnête homme*, but *foie d'oies de Strasbourg*—what a glorious discovery for Kieseroff!"

"Too late, poor fellow!" said Coakington, "for Charles de La Tour de Nésle was telling me last night that he was drowned skating on the Neva, last winter, and La Tour de Nésle added, that it could not have happened had he had any of our compatriots with him.

"Why not?" asked I.

"Because," replied the Attaché, with more wit and truth than civility, "it is impossible ever to break the ice with English people!"

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION XIX.

"And that will by no means clear the guilty."

Exodus, iv. 7.

"Take them, O Death! and bear away
Whatever thou can'st call thine own!
Thine image stamped upon this clay,
Doth give thee that, but *that* alone!

"Take them, O Grave! and let them lie
Folded upon thy narrow shelves,
As garments by the soul laid by,
And precious only to ourselves!

"Take them, O great Eternity!
Our little life is but a gust
That bends the branches of thy tree,
And trails its blossoms in the dust."

Longfellow's "SUSPIRIA."

THERE is one comfort at all events to be derived from relations! and I shall specify what that comfort is, lest everybody (with the exception of Adam, Melchisedec, Prometheus, and the monster in Frankenstein, who, happily for themselves, had no relations); but everybody, I mean, now living in the nineteenth century, should be inclined to deny this startling assertion! limited as it is; and the comfort is this, that however one's friends and acquaintances may glide over all that concerns us with indifference, and our relations, up to a certain point, do the same; yet, no sooner does any heavy or positive mischance befall us, any little slip down the hill, in which we get bemired by the

world's contumely, happen to us, than the latter instantly not only remember the privileges, but the *duties*! which the ties of blood impose upon them, and forthwith open a battery of reproaches, and chastening upon us, which prove how much they love us! a fact, which, had it not been elicited by these untoward circumstances, we might (judging from appearances, as we all are apt to do,) have had every reason to doubt.

As Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars pursued his way to Upper Brook Street on foot, the Thursday morning after poor Florence's release, while his friends Messieurs Benaraby and Coakington, were so lightly tripping over his domestic disasters, he was energetically biting his lips and racking his brain to try and imagine what sort of a reception he should have from Lady Mammonton, notwithstanding his cleverly garbled account of both transactions, and his having sent Slimeycraft as *avant courier*, to tell a few more circumstantial lies in detail upon both subjects. As for the suicide of poor Fraulein, he knew with his aunt's liberal and fashionable notions on those points, that fifty such murders she would only consider as fifty feathers in his cap. But his marriage! his *mesalliance*! that, indeed, would be, in her mundane creed, a serious crime! and she, like her nephew, had no other creed. For this reason, Slimeycraft had had instructions to stoutly deny the children, and the clever man had kindly allowed Mr. Wilmot to take them, so as that he might have all the trouble, anxiety, and expense of their infancy; their father! merely writing a pompous letter, stating that at some future time *he* should interfere about the boy's education; the girl's, of course, was of no consequence! and luckily for her he considered it so. And as to his eldest son, having inherited much of his father's nature, he was likely, if he lived, to pay him back in his own coin. But the poor baby, in less than a week, had rejoined his mother.

Oh! verily! there is, there must be, something fearfully wrong and rotten in a system that works so badly in a country where there is more religion *talked*, and less Christianity *felt*,

and *practised*, than in any other under the sun, and where *conventionalism*, in all things—and, alas ! most of all, in spiritual things—is so paramount and omnipotent, that the varnish of hypocrisy is accepted by all, and from all, in lieu of the validity of virtue, and the reality of religion. No matter how hollow, how faulty, or even how actively and systematically vicious a man's life may be, as long as he talks it and writes it well, he may ascend the pedestal of popularity, and step into one of the chief niches of the world's pantheon, there to receive its pagan idolatry. Surely this crying evil, which is every day becoming more rife and more leprous, must originate in the coldness, stand-offishness, and want of Christian vitality in the ministers of the Church itself ! who, instead of making the pulpit a *bond*, seem to make it a *barrier* between themselves and their fellow-creatures. How unlike their Divine Master ! who at all times was accessible—even to publicans and sinners ! In an admirable little book recently published, "The Characteristic Differences of the Four Gospels," by Andrew Jukes,* wherein he instances the beautiful self-devotion, and eminently *social* nature of the Saviour's character, the author says,—“Another point peculiar to this gospel” (that of St. Mark) “is the repeated notice we get here of the way in which our Lord permitted himself to be intruded upon in his retirement, and indeed upon all occasions. So thoroughly was he at the disposal of others (here only is it noticed) that ‘He could not so much as eat,’† for the multitude came together, and it was not in the heart of that blessed servant to refuse Himself to their importunities. This occurs again and again. Thus, after a day of toil, the Lord, rising up early, went and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed : but Simon, and they that were with him, followed after Him ; and when they found Him, they said unto Him, ‘All men seek for Thee, without a murmur, he at once received them, allowing the interruption.’ And in another portion of

* London : James Nisbet and Co., Berners Street, 1853.

† Chap. iii. 20, and vi. 31.

this work, speaking of the cures and healings wrought by the earlier ministers of the Church of Christ, the author adds,—

“I will only say, time was when virtue accompanied the hand of God’s servants; nay, when even the shadow of an apostle could heal. It will not hurt us to remember, even if the glory is now departed from us, that such things have once been. And this I will add, that should the day return, when devils are rebuked, and lame ones healed, those who look closely will see that a tender hand will not be wanting in the service. ‘But where,’ as one has asked, ‘are the layers on of hands, who give man to himself and God, by casting out his devils? Where is the clergy to whom sickness makes its last appeal for health? We find them among the fishermen of the first century, but not among our priests now. Many say that the age of miracle is past and gone. But Christianity, as we find it in Scripture, was the institution of miracle. And if the age of miracle is well nigh gone, is it not because the age of Christianity is well nigh gone? The age of mathematics would be past if no man cultivated them.’ But here I forbear. Let us be content to take beggars by the hand, we may then see things wholly out of the range of our present field of vision.”

Yea, verily, but let us also extend the meaning of the word “beggar,” like that of its patron saint Charity, to its catholic and complex meaning, and not restrict it to its narrowest and most solitary sense; and *then* we shall know, and knowing, feel, and *feeling*, *act* upon the knowledge, that *all* who suffer in mind, body, or estate, are *beggars*, imploring that most blessed of all alms, sympathy and interest from their fellow-creatures. Nay more, even the happy and the successful are still *beggars* at the thresholds of other hearts, craving from them the tribute of a kindred joy in their own rejoicing; till we each bestow such alms on one another, we may be church-goers, but we shall not be CHRISTIANS; and the core of society will continue to be cankered with many an undetected, if not quite unsuspected, Ponsonby Ferrars; men, the vice of whose single lives,

is as a tide to the crimes and sufferings of generations yet unborn!

But the old nursery axiom is the best to start upon; for, truly, "if every one would mend *one*" the world would soon be in a state of thorough repair; and if each, within their own sphere, however narrow and *apparently* insignificant that sphere may be (for none is in *reality*, being all *equal* lengths of the great chain with which the Eternal has bound creation)—however circumscribed as to numbers, or limited as to means, their sphere may be, they would *try* and give as much *pleasure* and *as little pain* as possible, and not give way to that most common of all sins, the "*leprosy of laziness, in sins of omission*"; they would soon be surprised at discovering how many undreamt of oases and gushing rills of living water there are even in the most seemingly barren and ungrateful deserts. But, alas! ye Dives of this world, as Spencer feelingly expresses it in his "Mother Hubbard's Tale"—

"Full little knowest thou that hast not tried,
What hell it is in suing long to bide,
To lose good days that might be better spent,
To waste long nights in pensive discontent,
To speed to-day—to be put back to-morrow,
To feed on hope—to pine with fear and sorrow,
To have thy prince's grace, yet want her peer'a,
To have thy asking, yet wait many years,
To fret thy soul with crosses and with cares,
To eat thy heart with comfortless despairs.
To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,
To spend, to give, to want, to be undone!
Unhappy wight! born to disastrous end,
That doth his life, in so long tendance spend."

But oh! far more hopelessly unhappy they who *might* ease all or even *one* of these creature trials, the offspring of our common nature, and yet we omit to do so; for *their* summer day's life must also end, and then comes the fearful! and ruinous reckon-

ing for their hollow and selfish pleasures, when they who in their abundance refused the crumbs from their superfluity, may vainly crave in *their* extremity FOR THE ONE DROP OF COLD WATER !

Not any of these thoughts however crossed the clever man's mind, as with a tremulous hand he knocked at Lady Mammon-ton's door ; on the contrary, he essayed to rise in his stirrups and clear all present obstacles by vaulting over into the arena of his public reputation or celebrity, which was all he cared for.

"For the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Still, although unencumbered by a heart, he had a superabundance of nerves, which had been greatly flurried within the last few days ; for the day after poor Adelaide's suicide he had repaired in great haste to Lady Moncton's, not only to tell her the story he wished disseminated in the world, but also to collect the ill-fated German girl's clothes and papers, under the pretext of sending them to her mother, but in reality to ascertain beyond a doubt, that they contained nothing that could possibly criminate him by giving the world any clue to the revolting truth of his conduct towards her ; for the hurried lines which the poor creature had in her last agony scrawled, and left on the margin of the river, by merely stating that he would not marry her, left an open space of conjecture for him to fill up as he pleased. Such relays of assistance, in their most critical dilemmas, does the devil ever send forward to his favourite votaries.

"How's my aunt ?" asked he hastily, as soon as the door was opened, pulling his under-lip the while, as if in so doing there was a counter charm against any ill tidings he might hear.

"Well, sir, upon the whole, I think her ladyship is pretty well," said Pumilion, with even *more* than the dignity of a butler, for it was almost with the mysterious importance of a prime minister that these, in themselves simple words, were uttered.

"These d——d servants!" *thought* Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars; "they always know or suspect everything one don't want them to know. Anybody with her?" added he aloud—

"Not at present, sir, but Mr. Slimeycraft has been here all the morning till about ten minutes ago." And in volunteering this last piece of intelligence, an incipient smile, half pitying, half protecting, lit up not only Mr. Pumilion's face, but seemed also to illuminate the whole of his portly person; for which the clever man felt the strongest possible inclination to knock him down, had not his cleverness in time suggested the great impolicy of such a proceeding.

It is needless to say, that although Lady Mammonton was a particularly early riser, she was never the first in the house to know the daily news, as Pumilion was by far too *point de vice* a servant to think of placing the morning papers on the breakfast table without their being duly aired; and the most effectual method of achieving this point, he thought, was to read them himself first, before the pantry fire, so that he was perfectly *au courant* to the two little biographical sketches of which Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was the hero; and for that matter so were the two footmen, as they *tried* to stand respectfully on one side to let their mistress's nephew pass; but still an air of consciousness seemed to pervade them to their very powder, for what are footmen but the ambulating mirrors of a butler?—so that the substance of any family anecdotes centred in Pumilion was sure to be reflected by them. There was something, too, more than usually elastic in Pumilion's step as it rebounded over the thick Axminster stair-carpet, while he preceded the clever man up-stairs, and threw open the door of a little room called the *boudoir*; and much more literally named than those domiciliary *bijoux* generally are; as it was into this little *sanctum* that Lady Mammonton usually retired whenever she was labouring under a fit of the sulks, or an attack of the spleen; consequently, in this small room of her large house it was that her ladyship passed the most of her time.

When Pumilion opened the door and announced Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, she was sitting in the corner of a divan with her bonnet on, ready equipped for her diurnal drive after luncheon, "The Morning Puff" in hand, reading with the same *gusto* that she might have done the last new novel, the account of poor Fraulein's suicide, which had been greatly and beautifully embellished for the occasion, with a charming *mise en scène* of an allegorical *tableau* of Virtue weeping over the frailty of Love! in the background; and Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars *en héros de roman*, in the foreground, crowned with roses, it is true, but still lacerated by their thorns, at the tragedy of which his fatal attractions and rigid principles! had been the innocent causes, and which would be as good as a puff of fifty-publisher power to him, not only all over the immoral Continent, but throughout "moral! England" itself.

No sooner had Pumilion closed the door—an effort of self-discipline that he did not accomplish without bestowing the very antipodes of a benediction upon that ridiculous fashion of *portières*, which rendered keyholes perfectly useless—than the clever man glided forward, and dropping upon one knee, and rapturously seizing Lady Mammonton's skinny hand (a piece of buffoonery of which the old lady was particularly fond), he exclaimed, with an air and tone as if overwhelmed with grief and penetrated with remorse,—

"Oh! my dearest aunt, I fear that those two horrid paragraphs must have annoyed and distressed you; and if so, I shall never forgive myself. Indeed, the affair of that poor misguided German girl (whom I did my best to serve, getting Lady Mone-ton to take her as a governess, little dreaming she cared for me!) will be an incubus to me for the rest of my life." And he covered his face with his hands.

"Oh! *that*, my dear Henry, only redounds in every way to your credit; and it's not your fault if nature has made you so attractive, and if young women will be so silly. But this horrid marriage of yours! that, indeed, is much more unpardon-

able. And though it is lucky the forward creature is dead (for *I* never should have received her) yet it is terrible her having left three children, and two of them sons! And your having been married so long ago, makes them legitimate, it is true, but for that very reason will cause me to make a considerable difference in the disposal of my property."

"Good heavens! my dearest aunt," cried Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, starting to his feet, and now unaffectedly blanched with genuine terror, "did not Slimeycraft tell you that there were no children? And here," added he, seizing "*The Morning Puff*" with both his trembling hands, and pointing to the paragraph, "done to order,"—"you see my marriage with the girl was a compulsory one, on her death-bed, to satisfy the scruples of the father, who is a country parson."

"Oh! yes, yes; but look here," rejoined Lady Mammon-ton—shaking her head solemnly, as she produced "*The Times*" from under the squab of the divan where she had carefully hidden it—"here is this Mr. Wilmot's statement, made with the most terrible minuteness; and here is his letter to me, in which he repeats all this statement, and says he can show me, or my lawyer, the marriage certificate. Now, if it is so, this is what I never will and never can forgive you, to have so deceived me! And worse still," (for her ladyship always graduated the scale of morality! and hence her nephew's nice moral sense,) "yes, infinitely worse! your so degrading yourself as to marry a country clergyman's daughter!—a nobody!" screamed the old lady in alto. During this address, for about a second, the clever man physically felt as if his patron saint in *propria persona* had been choking him; but rallying with a desperate effort (for what is the use of high-pressure patent villany if it is not equal to all emergencies), he said—

"Well now, really, my dear aunt, for a woman of your shrewdness and intense clear-sightedness (for I don't know so clever a woman anywhere), I wonder you don't see that the whole of this elaborate statement of pretended facts is all a got-

up thing—a *ruse*, in fact of old Wilmot's; and perhaps not an unpardonable one for a man in his position, to patch up his daughter's reputation; and as she lived with me some time, of course he'd antedate the marriage."

"Ay, but the children!" broke in the old lady.

"Bah! my dear aunt, another *ruse* of old Wilmot's; doubtless to goad you or me to get him a fat living to contradict this statement; for those parsons have always an eye to the main chance. There are no children, I tell you."

"But the marriage certificate, which he says he can show to me or to my lawyer, but which he won't trust out of his possession?"

"Why, of course, another *ruse*; some vamped-up forgery or other. And as to your sending your solicitor to see it, I think it would be *infra dig.* in the extreme for you even to let Quibble and Graball, your solicitors, know that you for a moment credited such a statement! As if I would, or could deceive you, my dearest aunt, after all your kindness to me. I do not, of course, presume to dictate to you, whose sense I always feel to be so superior to my own; but if I might advise, I should say, do as I do with all such slanders, treat them with contempt. This is always my plan."

And the plan of most liars, where a stubborn truth is concerned, that they would not for the world awaken, for fear of its trumpet tongue!

"But," added he, "if you have any curiosity about seeing into this forgery, I would send Slimeycraft to investigate the matter; and also to tell the old fellow, that he had better be quiet, as neither you nor I are the sort of people to be intimidated into giving a bribe to arrest a calumny. Besides, as a clever woman of the world, you must know that nothing has so short a memory as the said world—forgetting everything at the end of nine days if things are only quietly let to drop. But in taking up *on dits* to refute them, it is we ourselves who stamp them with the die of fact, and issue them for general circula-

tion. And I must say, my dearest aunt, that I am not a little hurt to think that *you* should believe this interested and mushroom parson's statement before MY HONOUR!"

"Well, my dear Henry," said Lady Mammonton, completely *both-eared*, between his copious flattery and his consummate audacity, "as the mother is luckily dead, it is not so much matter about the marriage, but will you take your oath on the Bible,—for you know I am very religious (!)—that you have no sons, or indeed any children by this woman?"

"To be sure I will, my dear aunt," said he, taking the proffered book with one hand from her, and replacing it on the table with the other, as he added, in a wheedling tone, again sinking on one knee before her, "At the same time, I would rather kiss you,—"

Here, to the clever man's no small relief, the door of the boudoir was again opened, the *portière* raised, and Pumilion, in his most sonorous voice, announced—

"Mr. Stuckup Starchington, my Lady!" at the same time following the reverend gentleman into the room, to place a chair for him, while Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars had barely time to rise from his devotions, regain his feet, and make a stiff bow to the stiff clergyman, whom he did not know; the former being a recent *trouvail* of his aunt's.

The Rev. Stuckup Starchington, who had been cast at the regular Church and State foundry, was so far a man of metal, that he looked, and performed all the functions of existence (preaching included) like a cast-iron machine; but to rich dowagers he was particularly *dulcifluous*, clearly demonstrating to *their* satisfaction, that however difficult it might be for "a rich *man* to enter the kingdom of Heaven," there was nothing easier than for a rich *woman* to do so, who had her property at her own disposal; and *fulfilled his missions* by minding her Starchington,—not that he ever talked religion *out* of the pulpit, or preached *Christianity* in it, for he was too well-bred to do the former, and too orthodox to do the latter, so that his conversa-

tion consisted of an agreeable and well-selected assortment of small-talk, very soothing, not to say very somniferous, and his sermons of such a tangle of texts, and doctrinal hard knots, as would have puzzled the Fathers themselves; or even the dowagers, his chief patronesses; only that from not understanding one word of his exordiums, *they* naturally concluded that they were extremely profound, and of course felt proportionately edified. Out of gratitude for this gratuitous attention of theirs—we say gratuitous, because they did not reap any information in return for it,—the Rev. Stuckup Starchington held a sort of weekly Cossack Psychological Zenana, consisting entirely of old women and old maids. These were held in a fashionable assembly room; wherein, however, a line of demarcation was drawn, in the shape of an old red cloth curtain brought across the room, to shut out the profane *locale* of such worldly doings as were enacted there at other times; and before this curtain was erected, not exactly a temporary pulpit, but a square box, the facsimile of that in which Punch enacts the moral and domestic drama of his successful career, save that this one had no top to it, or the reverend gentleman would not have had room to be stuck up in it (and which, from the golden harvest he reaped, he had never yet found to be the wrong box). He weekly held forth, before a decanter of water, a tumbler, and about a hundred and fifty dowagers, upon some *one phrase*, which he patiently, and emphatically reiterated, for about an hour and a quarter; and which explained itself at the end to mean, that they were to subscribe liberally to some mission in Mexico, or some conflagration in Cornwall; or to some private fund to enable parish beadles and churchwardens to attend to their duties, and dine more comfortably and less onerously together, on the occasion of any parochial meeting. Then would the old ladies simultaneously wake up, as if stirred by some portion of the machinery extending from the lecturer; and, fumbling for their purses, would ask each other if Mr. Starchington had not been heavenly! that evening.

"Aye, dear creature! he's always the same!" would reply the dowager so interrogated; "*he* never *fails* one!" and she could not have said more, nor less, of a dose of morphine, or of lettuce pills, neither could they have produced calmer slumbers than did the monotonous mouthings of the Rev. Stuckup Starchington; while he, as he saw the bright sovereigns and crisp five and ten pound notes shower into the plates, looked complacently from them to the donors, and thought, such is the triumph of mind over matter, that—

"Age could not wither, nor custom stale
Their infinite variety."

The reverend gentleman had called on this particular morning with a small tissue paper full of little fluffy, nearly impalpable grains. They were the seed of a sort of aerial anemone, called the Marvel of Cathay, and indigenous to China, where they grow in little starry, shadowy, blue flowers, about bowers and arbours, without any apparent root or stem. These seeds were the first ever imported into England; and he brought them as a rare offering to Lady Mammonton: for he was full of such little *prévenances* and delicate attentions, whenever there was a new mission on the *tapis*, or *wherever* there was money to be obtained for it.

Her ladyship having expressed herself delighted with being the possessor of such a treasure, and said that she should instantly forward it to Fergusson, her gardener, at Mammonton, and order him to try it in the winter garden, which was always kept at tropical heat; and the Reverend Stuckup Starchington having on his part, said that he knew no one so worthy of it as her ladyship, which, considering the nature of the flower, was a compliment *un peu en l'air*; he then turned to Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, whom Lady Mammonton, having introduced by name as her nephew, the reverend gentleman said how highly honoured he felt in seeing so distinguished a personage, and one whose writings were calculated to do so much good (!). To which the

clever man, having modestly and truthfully replied, that to do good was the sole aim of his humble existence; and the Reverend Stuckup Starchington having rejoined, with equal truth, that he would not be Lady Mammonton's nephew were it otherwise, then proceeded to the real gist of his visit, by abstracting from his pocket little duodecimo prospectuses, beautifully printed on hot-pressed paper, of an intended mission into the interior of Central America, for the discovery, recovery and conversion of of the Aztecs, as a peculiar people—though not exactly God's peculiar people—and, of course, as there is so little ignorance, heathenism, distress, and abject misery of every grade, shade, and colour at our own gates, groaning under every hedge of our country, and skulking through every street and alley of our great Babylon, then followed an eloquent appeal—not indeed to every Briton to set sail, for it was much better for *such* purposes, that they should anchor, and never launch out into a wider ocean of knowledge;—but that every Briton's gold should instantly set sail to make the acquaintance of the Aztecs, which might yet be discovered and recovered as a nation;—thereby proving by practical illustration, that riches do indeed “make to themselves wings!” and heading each of these prospectuses was a charming little sketch of the two extant Aztecs, with their swinish profiles, which was evidently a *prima facie* way of intimating that subscribers to the Mission were expected to go the whole animal!

Now it so happened that the clever man, having seen the Aztec young lady exhibited in London, felt very little interest in her conversion, or even in her perversion, which was much more in *his* way; but still, it being part of his game to have his name eternally before the public in print in some shape or other, and one of his trump-cards being public subscriptions (for he never gave a shilling to private or individual charities, *on principle*!—for every vice is on principle! now-a-days—the principle of making the worse appear the better reason on all occasions)—he now, after a pompous eulogium upon the Rev. Stuckup Starchington's profound piety (!) and the extreme usefulness

of his Mission, put his name down for £50; and wrote a cheque for that amount, at which the Rev. Stuckup Starchington was overwhelmed with gratitude and surprise, (as well he might be!) and Lady Mammonton said—

“Well, my dear Henry, that is very good of you, I’m sure; *very*—but,” added she, with a little chuckle, and turning to Mr. Starchington—for she was not one who ever liked to hide her light under a bushel—for, indeed, as she very sensibly thought, of what use is light so hidden?—“he knows very well that I shall give it back to him, for all these things generally come out of *my* pocket!”

“Most noble! of your ladyship; and how fortunate! that Providence should have bestowed upon you a purse sufficiently extensive and ever open (!) to keep pace with so liberal a mind!” But perceiving at half a glance, that the clever man by no means relished this public allusion of his aunt’s to the leading-strings’ state of his finances, the reverend gentleman secured the cheque for £50, and dexterously changed the subject, by saying to him—

“I’m sure I should be the very last person to praise, much less to recommend anything Popish!—even an elixir; but I have been trying to persuade her Ladyship to try some of that really miraculous cordial made at the *grande Chartreuse*—its vivifying, I had almost said its rejuvenating effects, are really wonderful!—and I don’t think Lady Mammonton takes sufficient nourishment.”

“Ah! no,—I don’t think she does. I wish my dear aunt you’d try and take Mum,” added her nephew, who even into his *persiflage* always must needs throw in a spice of pedantry.

“Mum! my dear, what on earth is that? I’ve heard of mum-chance; but I never, by any chance, heard of *taking* mum.”

“Why, my dear aunt, I don’t exactly know how it is made; but it is what Lady Masham gave Locke when he was ill,” (he did not say when he was dying)—“and it was the only

thing that revived him, or did him any good ; and as such a beverage once existed, I should think it *still* existed, and might be easily discovered."

"Oh! my dear," said the old lady, shaking her head with a slight shudder—"you're a vast deal too clever for me!—and you know, I know nothing about Locke, and detest metaphysics so much, I would rather swallow all the physic in Savory and Moore's shop any day."

Here Pumlion announced luncheon. There was something exhilarating in the sound, which always communicated to the Rev. Stuckup Starchington a sort of spurious facetiousness—so now, as he offered his arm to Lady Mammonton, he ventured to launch his first small jest upon the shallow stream of society, by observing, with a smile, which served as a link to show where the joke *was* to those present, that he supposed *mum* was a *dilution* of "*Locke on the Human Understanding!*"

"Very likely," said the lady, not in the least suspecting that the reverend gentleman had said anything that required a laugh; while her nephew, from a fellow-feeling, more alive to conversational expectations, bestowed the obolus of a ha! ha! upon him, as he followed them down stairs, adding—

"At all events it is certain that some person's understandings are *mum* all their lives."

"What will you take?" asked Lady Mammonton, appealing to her guest. "This is only a neck of venison, which perhaps you don't like; but I recommend you to try those lobster cutlets, and those *petits pain*, a sort of brioche bread, both of which my cook is famous for; the bread he learned to make when he was with me at Dresden."

Now the Rev. Stuckup Starchington, being humble-minded, did *not* by any means despise a neck of venison (at least when a haunch was not there); still, with an orthodox cleaving to the loaves and fishes, and a prudential determination of following his patroness's advice, he contented himself with the lobster

couplets and *petits pain*, which he found did not belie their reputation. As for the clever man,—

“He could not eat, he could not eat,
His stomach was not good ;
But he could drink, but he could drink,
With him who wears a hood ! ”

So that Lady Mammonton's sparkling moselle suffered accordingly ; and while he attended to his own libations, the reverend gentleman was assiduously pressing his hostess to eat ; and on this occasion he enforced precept by example, making the latter rather exceed than fall short of the former ; and whether it was this bright example, or the influence of the still more brilliant moselle, it is impossible to say ; but nothing could be more blandly, fondly, tenderly amiable than Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was to his aunt ; so that when the chariot came to the door, he entreated—nay, more, he *insisted*—that she should allow him to have the happiness (that was the word) of accompanying her in her drive. Now really this *was* most amiable and self-sacrificing of him, as on the warmest summer's day (not that our well-regulated climate is ever guilty of any great extremes in that way) Lady Mammonton always kept the windows up ; and there was, moreover, a combined and concentrated odour of ether and snuff, peculiarly unpleasant to all olfactory nerves but her own ; or what her nephew would have designated a ceaseless struggle between the real and the ideal, in which the latter—as it always did with him—greatly predominated. Not so with the Rev. Stuckup Starchington, who always kept a sharp look-out after the real, or in other words, the needful ; so, making quite sure that Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' cheque was safely ensconced within his waistcoat pocket, he rose with a gentle sigh, whether of repletion or regret none but himself could tell, from table, and again gracefully and gallantly offered his arm to Lady Mammonton, to conduct her to her carriage, wherein having safely placed her, he turned to the clever man, and taking off his hat

and extending his exceedingly white hand, which looked as if it had been marshalling missions of almond paste and *pâte de miel* all its life, again thanked him in a loud voice for his munificent subscription to the Aztec Discoverative, Recoverative, Regenerative Association, and finally turning to kiss his hand to Lady Mammonton, humbly ventured to hope that, with her usual benevolence, she would not forget *his poor heathens*, at his lecture on Thursday.

While Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars could not help thinking in his own mind, as he sprang into the carriage determined, by bearing, to conquer his fate, that the Rev. Stuckup Starchington's unhatched heathens were even greater myths than any of the other numerous rabble of the heathen mythology with whom he was already acquainted, but he took especial care not to *say* so; for, as the chief magi of the order of Charlatans, he had the greatest possible veneration and consideration for all humbugs, whatever branch of the science they might pursue; whether in its higher, its mediocre, or even its lowest walks; for his theory was that clever people were sent into the world to do, and fools to be *done*, so that "animated nature," as far as the human species was concerned, in his system, was composed of but these two classes the biter and the bitten. And he once, in a private lecture (for these things don't do for the public), but quite *en petit comité* to some cronies of his own way of thinking, had beautifully and practically illustrated this proposition by shewing, through the medium of a solar microscope, how the monsters, even in one drop of water, devoured and preyed upon each other; where it was, nevertheless, quite clear to the commonest capacity that the *eaters* were not the *eaten*, and *vice versa*.

"Where to, my lady?" asked James, the footman, tired of waiting.

"Well, I think about the green lanes of Kensington."

"Oh! my dear aunt, what *can* possess you to go there? bad air, and all sorts of things," said Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars, in great

trepidation. "You had much better go to Chiswick, or Fulham, or Richmond."

"Nonsense! my dear, the air of Kensington is particularly good; and I'm fond of those old green lanes, and it's not too far and don't tire the horses,—to Kensington, Jeemes."

And before the clever man could make any further remonstrances, Jeemes had shut to the door, got up behind, given the order, and the carriage had driven off. Rejoicing, however, on the whole, that this much-dreaded interview had passed off, up to the present time, so much better than he could possibly have expected, and determined to make hay while the sun shone—which it did most unpleasantly at that moment, full into his eyes, accompanied by the fumes of the snuff and the ether; for, like all old people, Lady Mammonton was fond of a glare of light, and would not have a single blind down,—her nephew now began in a coaxing, yet deferential tone, with—

"My dearest aunt, I have been wanting for some time past to ask your consent and advice about my marriage with Lady Mabel Malden, an exceedingly fine woman, certainly, but I confess her unusually large jointure is the chief attraction for me; for, theoretically speaking, I have a prejudice against marrying a widow, for they have either loved or hated another man, and either, to me, is an insuperable objection, as in the first instance they have felt too much, and in the second they know too much; for, in marriage, hatred is knowledge, and women should be the reverse of horses; one gets others to break in one's horses, but one likes to break in one's women oneself. Some persons believe in indifference, but there is no such thing in the marriage state; it is always like the institution itself, horribly *prononcé*, love or hatred, though most generally the latter; in what are called love affairs there may be indifference, for in most of them people never love enough to hate, or feel enough to love, and neither have the power nor the opportunity of injuring the other sufficiently (as in marriage) to rivet disappointment or desertion into antipathy."

"Good gracious ! my dear," said the old lady, looking both mystified and alarmed, "I'm sure I don't know what Mr. Starchington would say to your opinions upon matrimony ; but with regard to Lady Mabel, *that* I think a most sensible and eligible match, and I am delighted to hear that it is *en train*, for Miss Delazouche, who called upon me the other morning, rather alarmed me by saying that you had had a disappointment about that handsome girl, that Miss Panmuir, who is to marry the Duke of Liddesdale."

"My dear aunt, how you *can* ! listen to that d——d gossiping old mummy, Miss Delazouche," cried the clever man, nearly stamping the floor of the carriage through with rage, to think that any one should presume to set it about that he had been disappointed, for fifty dukes ! much less for one, was more than his intense self-conceit could brook. "An old petrification," added he, "who never knows one word she is saying, and who, I dare say, was alluding to some of the *can-cans* of her own day, when Anthony Ferrars was, I believe, refused by one of the Gunnings, before she married the Duke of Hamilton ; for old Delazouche herself might have been a belle about that time, and I dare say used to play at *ombre* with George the Second, make eyes at the Duke of Marlborough, and abuse Lord Bolingbroke."

"No, no, my dear," rejoined Lady Mammonton, who felt that her nephew's wilful chronological misstatements almost amounted to personality. "You know very well that Pamela Delazouche is not nearly as old as George the Second's time, for *I* remember perfectly before I was out myself, hearing on the birth-night that she was first presented, so much of her minuet with the Prince of Wales, and *that* it was which got her made Maid of Honour to Queen Charlotte, which you know was long after George the Second's time ?"

"Yes, I am aware of that fact," laughed her nephew, as he hastily scratched over the mist made by his own breath on the

window-glass, the words "*old goose !*" and as hastily obliterated them, lest his aunt should see them.

"So then," resumed the latter, "there is no truth in this story about you and Miss Panmuir?"

Here an idea crossed the clever man's brain, who never lost an opportunity (clever men never do): and he replied with a well acted air of modesty and reluctance, knowing full well that a strict injunction to secrecy was the surest method to make his aunt propagate the story every where, beginning with the vituperated Delazouche, whose single tongue was quite equivalent to an advertisement in each of the daily papers,—now that the stamp duty is repealed.

"Why, my dear aunt, I know I may trust you, and that the matter will go no further; for, considering how injurious it would be to the poor girl, even to breaking off her very advantageous marriage; but the truth is, *she did like me*, and if I would have married her she would have refused the Duke of Liddesdale; and to tell me this, the poor creature was silly and imprudent enough to come one morning to my chambers, at the Albany, and as I was expecting a visit from a little *coryphée*, who arrived while she was there, I was obliged, for an hour or two, to make a sort of *oubliette* of my dressing-room, and thrust Miss Panmuir into it, till *Anatole* was gone."

Now this wicked and monstrous falsehood Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars was well aware would first set the garbled and unravellable slander afloat, that he wished, about poor Edith's humane visit to Magnolia Lodge, while *he*, as usual, would be *out* of the scrape, and quite safe, by always employing *others* to do his dirty work, and disseminate his lies.

His worthy aunt, not the least shocked at his ungentlemanlike and dishonourable conduct, in telling such a thing, even were it true! and never for a moment suspecting that the whole was a most villainous fabrication, to ruin, if possible, an innocent and exemplary girl, who had been guilty but of the one crime of

refusing him, she said with a smile, whose suavity could only be equalled by its silliness—

“Well, I’m sure, my dear Henry, you ought to be very much flattered at all the young women being in love with you in this way, and going such extravagant lengths about you, and it is *very* much to your credit that you don’t take advantage of it; for I’m sure Mr. Stuckup Starchington himself could not behave better than you seem to have done upon all these occasions; but I suppose the men are different now to what they used to be; for *such* things as I heard of poor dear Lord Mammonton when George the Fourth was young; though I’m sure to look at him when *I* married him, nobody could have believed them.”

“Ah!” exclaimed the nephew, “*‘si jeunesse savait? Si vieillesse pouvait?’* therein lies the whole riddle of life, my dear aunt.”

At this stage of the conversation, the carriage suddenly stopped, the duo looked out simultaneously through the front windows to ascertain the cause of the stoppage; they had arrived at the entrance of one of the green lanes of Kensington, it was that one which led to Magnolia Lodge, and the cause of the impediment was a hearse drawn by four horses, and followed by three mourning coaches and several private carriages.

“Dear me, how unlucky!” cried Lady Mammonton, covering her face with her hands; “they say there is nothing so ominous as to meet a funeral full face; well, it cannot be helped; I suppose I shall go *next*; but, as Mr. Stuckup Starchington said so beautifully and originally, at his last Thursday’s lecture, we must all go *some time or other*! My dear, tell Jeemes to ask whose funeral it is?”

But Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars would be very sorry to have delegated that mission to any body. So, hastily turning the handle, and kicking open the carriage-door with his foot, he sprang to the ground. *He*, at all events, was at no loss to conjecture whose funeral it was, even before his eyes convinced

him of the truth of his surmise. Calling to the coachman, sharply, to back, as he himself jumped behind a hedge, through the tracery of the green leaves he could contemplate the *cortège* at his ease. Under the hearse walked poor Alp, his ears and his tail hanging in all the lank lugubriousness of canine grief. In the first mourning coach he espied Mr. Wilmot, Alciphron Murray, and his own little son, Henry, the child's face clouded to almost as sombre a hue as that of his mourning frock, by the dark shadow of a premature sorrow. In the second coach there was only Mrs. Bousefield—all weeds (but fresh ones) and woe, sobbing on the shoulder of Joe Roberts, the extent of whose hat-band exceeded that of the mutes. While in the third coach were the three female servants, who had composed Florence's small household; then followed the carriages of Colonel Chipchase, and those of about a dozen of other friends, at the head of which was the state carriage of the Duchess of Liddesdale, and the duke's brougham, with that of Mr. Rushbrook, bringing up the rear. The clever man, who, at the sight of the hearse and the mourning coaches, had felt a sort of spasmodic uncomfortableness about the region of the left side, no sooner perceived the Liddesdale carriages than he bit his lip nearly through, with a horrible oath, and stamped his foot till his exquisitely varnished boot became imbedded in the red marl of the turnip field in which he was standing. At length, the procession, even to the doctor's carriage, had turned the corner into the high-road leading to the old church, where, during her lifetime, it had always been Florence's wish that her remains should rest.

Had the whole of the *cortège* passed over him, bodily, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars could scarcely have felt more oppressed while it *was* passing, or have drawn a longer breath when it *had* passed; and no sooner had it done so, than, clearing the hedge at a bound, he returned to his aunt and jumped into the carriage, as if life and death (his *own* life and death *bien entendu*) had depended upon the celerity of his movements.

♦

"Well, my dear, did you find out whose funeral it was?" asked Lady Mammonton.

"Yes, a Mrs. Henry's, or some such name."

"I saw two carriages with ducal coronets, relations, I suppose; for, besides having scarves, the servants were also in mourning."

"Ah, very likely. I'm sorry to leave you to return home, my dearest aunt," said he, pulling the check, "but I've got wet in my feet; so, if you'll allow me, I'll get out, and walk to a cab-stand, as I wish to get home and change my boots, as soon as possible."

"Oh, dear, no, my dear, on no account; I'll take you to the Albany. Jeemes," added Lady Mammonton, when the latter came to the door for orders, "to the Albany, and tell Beilby to drive fast."

Fast, accordingly, they drove, and a quarter of an hour brought them to the Albany, where the old lady left her nephew to his pleasant thoughts, and where, for the present, we will leave him also.

The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

SECTION XX.

"The God-head is a boundless sea, on which the thin island of creation floats."

"Most noble spirit,
To whom all beauty and all virtuous love
Appeared in their native properties,
And did enrich that noble soul of his
With treasures passing this world's worth—
Worthy of heaven itself, which brought it forth."
Spencer's lines on Sir Philip Sidney.

"Wee unto you Pharisees—Hypocrites."

"——Like one that stands upon a promontory,
And spies a far-off shore where he would tread,
Wishing his foot were equal with his eye,
And chides the sea that sunders him from thence,
Saying he'll lade it dry to have his way."

Shakespeare.

O! TRUMPERY! O! Moses! as my Lord Duke says, in "High life below stairs," and which, for the present times, is the very best translation that can possibly be of *O! tempora! O! mores!* We are sorry to say it, but the great Benarabian Hebrew point controversy by no means progressed as its author could have desired; however, his talents, like his principles (?) being of that available, active, and gymnastic kind, that they could, at a moment's notice, vault from one extreme to another; he did not, as a lesser genius might have done, waste his time in sighing over ruined arguments and mutilated similes, but with one vigorous whirl! he instantly turned off the Jordan and

turned on the Thames! (even with all its impurities) into a sort of political biography (query *Bejobraffy*?) for the present generation, wherein, though richly gilded, and beautifully carved, so as to suit the votaries of all political sects—

His principles, like tavern rooms, bore token,
That to all parties they were ever open.

For truly, he was above all those little qualms and scruples which fetter and impede meaner mortals; like that other Chancellor of the Exchequer, the versatile Charles Townshend, he had “talents for flourishing away in a speech, and for flattering and misleading the House of Commons.” Like him too, “he could write a pamphlet or betray a connection, and laugh at it. He could even mitigate the resentments of those he had the most highly offended; and by a certain mixture of animal vivacity, highly seasoned with wit and good humour, he possessed the knack of disarming the very persons he had thus grossly betrayed.” In short, the rungs of the ladder of life were by him ascended with a mixed dignity and defiance, as if they had been the steps of a throne, of which *he* was the autocrat; thus surveying the rest of mankind after a King David sort of fashion (not the Sternhold and Hopkins edition), and apparently always mentally asserting with that monarch, as *he did* survey them—

“Man-asses! you are mine!”

While *mob* and not *Moab*, was the utensil whereby he performed his ablutions, which might account for his not always having politically clean hands, notwithstanding that no public character had ever made a more liberal use of soft soap.

His clever friends, Messieurs Coakington and Ferrars, with the rest of his political stud,—he kept up,—quite certain that though (through bad jockeyship, about the weighing, when they were all found wanting,) they had bolted at the last spring meeting, he should be sure to win the next Derby.

Now turn we from these constellations to the minor stars of our hemisphere. The reader will scarcely require to be told, that on her return from poor Florence's funeral, Mrs. Bousefield was "*that* low, and *that* nervous," that there was nothing left for her to do, but to faint, without a moment's warning, into Joe Roberts's arms, but he may require to know that upon recovering her speech, she said—

"No! Mr. Roberts, I didn't think has hany think could hever tempt me to replace poor dear Mr. Bousefield, but aving seen so much sorer and durmestic haffliction lately, I should be the last puson to hinflict ha wound hon a faithful eart; therefore I haccept your hoffer, wishing hon you every appiness, his my sincere wish; hand of course leaving it hentirely hoptional with yourself what church we shall be married hin,—honly hexcepting the hold church hat Kensington, for that would be quite too much for my nerves hin their present state."

And the mere thought of such a thing, caused a second syncope, of which Joe Roberts had again to bear the brunt; while his account of the matter to his father, was: "that he never was so tookt a back! in all his born days, as ven the vidder said she accepted what he had never offered,—namely, himself as her husband,—indeed so tookt a back was he that it give him the staggers; and he did all he could to 'make her understand that never having been used to it,' he was sadly afeared he'd never be able to go in double harness; but still she stuck to the pint, and seemed to say as she'd keep the whip-hand, *she'd* see to *that*; therefore you see father," concluded Joe, "as I had nothink helse to give, and the vidder seemed to have tookt a fancy to me, I didn't think it would be purlite to refuse; and so we was put to, at St. Saviour's, Southwark; and as I don't care nothink about her, onè way nor tother, only that I must say, as she is sound wind and limb, and free from vice, as far as I know,—I tries to draw as well together as I can."

And as late as three months after this important event, Mrs. Joe Roberts, late Bousefield, was heard to declare, one evening

while *taking tea* with a female friend, and during the fourth cup, and third round of toast, while weeping over the six original "dear hinfants," "that halthrough she ad never oped, hand therefore had never hattempted such a thing has to make hanythink like poor dear Mr. Bousefield! of Joe Roberts, yet she must say he was a very tidy sort of man, for all that; and a very good 'usban, worth one *arf* hof the fine gents agoing; heven when you come to hadd the hother *arf* to it; hand hindeed Mrs. Jagger, ma'am," continued the bride, "hif Mr. Roberts" (for like his predecessor, she always gave him his title) "would honly leave hof talking continually about going out to Horsetrailer, to that poor boy Jack, which hof course means that he his thinking hon his *first* love, that 'ere Fanny Parker,—I don't mean to say has I shouldn't be pufectly 'appy, hunder *egsisting* circumstances; but lawr! hif hevry 'ooman was to begin counting hup their usban's fust loves, I don't believe they'd hever get to the last hon 'em—hunless hindeed they was to marry a baby in long clothes, and heven then, hit would hall come after, hif it had not come afore; so the honly way his, Mrs. Jagger, to shut one's heyas to hall has his past, hand keep a sharp look hout for the futer; though Mr. Roberts's being lame his one good thing to prevent him running after what he 'as no business to run after—though has yet, I'm 'appy to say, has he happears fond of his '*ome*, hand his tea, hand his toast, hand hall hit befits a married man to be. Hand I'm truly thankful to say, Mrs. Jagger, since I'm no longer a hunpurtected widder, druv here, hand poked there, hand subjected to the himperence hof hevry good-for nothink feller; my nerves is considerable better, hand I don't come hall hover hin them dreadful heats has I used to do.—Not a drop more, thank *you*, Mrs. Jagger, ma'am," concluded she, steadily resisting the seduction of a fifth cup, by turning her own down in the saucer, and putting her spoon across it, "I never take much at hany time, for my *disgestion* his that weak, from hall I have gone through hat different times, that like my *sperite*, hit can't bear much; but

the Almighty his very good, 'hand maketh the barren 'ooman to keep 'ouse, hand be the joyful mother of children,' whershof I ad six, Mrs. Jagger ; but that says nothink, hand enough his has good has a feast ; hand a contented mind his a *con-tinial* feast."

The Duke of Liddesdale and his mother were at Glenfern, ready to receive Edith, Mrs. Dunbar, and the Archdeacon, who had now left London to join them. And when the duke looked round at the happiness and well-being he had created, in all directions, well might he feel a glow of honest pride, at the idea of the delightful surprise this regenerated village would be to Edith. For he had established schools, first : to instil into the rising, and even into the adult generation, vital and practical Christianity ; and then to teach them every branch of usefulness ; and not superficial, and at best useless learning (for it is not knowledge) that is now taught at our Sunday and National schools. For this purpose he had built a large sort of college, where the children of the poor were taught every branch of domestic and household service, with the option of choosing the particular walk that their own individual taste and capacity indicated ; whether it were that of a housemaid, cook, nursery-maid, kitchenmaid, scullion, or maid-of-all-work ; while, in order that they might be thoroughly taught, there were first-rate cooks, housekeepers, hair-dressers, and dress-makers to teach them ; and matrons, twelve in number, to oversee the whole establishment. These matrons, being selected from reduced gentlewomen, who were glad of so happy and peaceful an asylum, with a salary of \$50. a year each ; and they were purposely chosen from a superior class, as real gentlewomen are always more adaptive than upstarts, and more rationally conform themselves to circumstances. One half this building was conducted with similar arrangements for boys, where they were also taught every branch of domestic servitude, or trades, as their own likings might select. But in both portions of the establishment the children, by being taught to attend upon each other when

ill, were not only made thoroughly conversant with the requirements of invalids and the important duties indispensable for a sick-room ; but they were early taught the *humanities* of life, which so many require *to be taught* ! as, for *one* nature that is broad enough, deep enough, and generous enough, to practise them from intuition, there are *fifty* so hard, narrow, and selfish, that such can only be extorted from them by a long course of proper discipline ; and in the Glenfern school, if any child, adult, or young person, neglected to wait upon, solace, amuse, or attend to the work or wishes of a sick companion, they were so coldly looked upon, and so universally shunned by the rest of the community, that their lives became insupportable to them, till they had an opportunity of redeeming their character for kindness and humanity, on some future occasion. So that they not only *wished* to be useful to their fellow creatures, but what is equally important, they also learnt *how* to be so, for in such cases “ knowledge is power.”

A nephew of Mr. Wilmot's had been inducted to the living of Glenfern : Everard Wilmot by name ; for the duke had a healthy horror of the Stuckup Starchington school, and this gentleman was in every respect its antipodes ; being a sincere, genuine, unassuming, practical Christian minister ; and therefore, what every clergyman ought to be—the teacher, counsellor, and friend of his flock ; for the doctrine he preached from the pulpit, he more fully taught and illustrated by every act of his own life ; he had no set routine days and hours for visiting all classes, or any class of his parishioners ; on all days, at all hours, he was accessible to them, when they sought him ; and at all times he was with them, helping them to bear their burdens, whenever they were heaviest ; so that sometimes he might be daily for a month in one house, and not near another ; but always equally welcome, when he came, and equally trusted when he did not come ; nor was it only to his mere parishioners that his Christian love extended ; all who suffered in mind, body, or estate, were *his* brother, *his* sister, *his* mother, *his*

child, and therefore his flock. There was no stiff, cold, standoff conventionalism, for fear of being thought intrusive, for he knew that real kindness is never intrusive, being merely the holding out of the hand to the falling, or the rope to the drowning, which, even when not accepted, is always understood to be what it is—kindly meant.

But the Duke of Liddesdale also felt, what everybody who thinks deeply on the subject, and investigates it analytically must feel—that the *real* cause of the frightful increase of drunkenness and crime in the United Kingdom (notwithstanding the eternal potter about education, progression, and religious instruction) is the total absence of all rational and instructive *amusement* and *relaxation* for the people; who, however poor and lowly in station, are still human beings!—and, consequently, have human requirements and yearnings; the which not being satisfied—nay more, being totally neglected, and therefore undeveloped,—are struggling darkly and fatally through their moral nature, only evidenced by fitful gusts of crime and intemperance—just as physical diseases, while struggling through the system, cause all sorts of wayward and impracticable tempers, no cure for which can be ever attempted, till the latent evil is *thrown out* in the form of a tangible malady, when it may then be vigorously and successfully treated. In the present state of things, the lower orders have but two places of refuge for their leisure hours—the conventicle and the public-house; in the former they learn to be hypocrites, and in the latter to be brutes; but, as the Duke truly thought, instead of fining men for being drunk, it would be at once more rational and more humane to re-fine them, so as to prevent their getting drunk—to humanise them; in fact, by a constant *social* and *decorous* intercourse with the other sex, for whom they might then acquire more tender and deferential feelings than to murder and brutalise those who individually fall to their lot as chartered slaves. And for this purpose there was, in his National School, a sort of club held nightly after working hours,

but widely different to the institutions generally called by that name—where mechanics amid the fumes of beer, brandy, and tobacco, may talk either twaddle or treason ; and where they endeavour to redress grievances by hatching revolts. For to the Glenfern Club were admitted the female children and young women, as well as the boys and young men ; the former generally bringing their needlework, and the latter any mechanical works that they either might be learning, or were already skilled in ; and while seated round the long and well-lit table, (for the lighting of which each boy and girl subscribed a penny, a half-penny, or a farthing a week, according to their means, and for which their parents were also admitted,) one of the teachers, or the pupils themselves, male or female, when they read well enough, read out, either history, natural history, biography, or travels, and occasionally works of fiction, of a moral and improving kind, which reading used to last about two hours ; when they either danced, had an amateur concert, told amusing stories, or played at little games, as the majority should decide upon ; and, at half-past eight, a sermon and prayers concluded the evening, and it was always a source of great rejoicing when Everard Wilmot was there to officiate. Besides which they had cricket, foot-races, rowing-matches, diving, and all sorts of athletic open air amusements for the male portion of the community. This system was found to work admirably,—for the most fractious child is good, and the most furious man tame, while they are amused ; and no child, or young person of either sex, could appear at the evening club without a certificate from the matrons, or masters, stating that they had that day diligently and intelligently executed all their various household works—whether of gardening, stabling, farming, cooking, house-cleaning, washing, ironing, hair-dressing, dressmaking, shoe-making, tailoring, carpentering, baking, brewing, &c., &c., &c., as the case might be ; and had also been docile and obedient to their teachers, and amiable, obliging, considerate, and forbearing to their companions—consequently, not only great was

the disappointment, but also the disgrace of being absent from these evening amusements. And although this college for the religious and useful training of domestic servants, in *all* capacities, had only been established three years, it had turned out some such excellent, and first-rate servants, and such exemplary members of society, that its fame was widely spreading as a real practical blessing to the country: and even had the young people so trained never got places, which was not very likely, as people are always wanting servants—they still had such resources within themselves, and so much practical *every day* knowledge about those things indispensable to *daily existence* and well-being, that they never could be thrown upon the world as useless burdens to it, and helpless miseries to themselves. And as the broad foundation of their training had been to “DO THEIR DUTY IN THAT STATE OF LIFE INTO WHICH IT HAD PLEASED GOD TO CALL THEM;” their chief knowledge consisted in never attempting to go *beyond* this state, but scrupulously to *adorn it* by doing their duty *in it*; for their education had *refined* them too much to allow of their being guilty of the vulgar absurdity of attempting to be *fine*. So great, indeed, had become the fame of the Glenfern servants’ college, that many of the small gentry, clergy, and tradespeople, sent their sons and daughters there to be *usefully* educated; but they (with the exception of the children of the clergy, who were received gratis) had to pay half a crown a week each, sixpence a week each to the club; and one penny on each article of dress that their parents supplied them with.

Besides the school-house and club, there was also a large circular building in an open space or plain, on the outskirts of the village; and on Sunday evenings, after the afternoon service—for there was no evening service at Glenfern—to this building the whole of the population repaired, for it was a large amphitheatre containing a faithful and beautifully executed moving panorama of the Holy Land, with interludes of dioramas of all the Miracles of our Saviour, and some of the most striking inci-

dents in Bible History, painted by the best living Italian artists. Aided by these graphic and deeply interesting representations—there would Mr. Wilmot, every Sabbath evening, lecture on and expound with a pure simplicity,—plain to the capacity of his youngest, or least enlightened auditor, yet eloquent enough to have satisfied the most critical,—the sublimities of Gospel truth.

Such were the scenes to which the Duke of Liddesdale was looking forward to introduce his bride, and such also he meant, at no distant period, to create on his princely possessions at Liddesdale; but to *him* Glenfern, as the place of Edith's birth, was hallowed ground—the blest Canaan of *his* heart!—and therefore, as we have seen, he lost no time in making it the same to others. For *he* justly thought, that heaven's wealth of happiness!—or earth's wealth of gold, no mortal had a right to keep to themselves, and not share them with their fellow-creatures.

* * * * * *

And while the Duke of Liddesdale was thus employed in promoting the happiness of others, Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' solitariness and individual Utopia was also flourishing to his heart's—no, to his *head's* content; for Lady Mammonton, whether panic stricken at the *rencontre* of the funeral, or from any other more natural cause, such as the fulness of time, or the decay of nature; but certain it is, that she one morning, more by accident than design, died suddenly,—for so little had it been her intention to do so, that she had just ordered the carriage to call upon Miss Delazouche, bring her home to dinner with her, and take her in the evening to Mr. Stuckup Starchington's lecture; and knowing "poor Pam," as she called her, was not over-burdened in that way, she had generously set aside two £5 notes for her, to give to "THE AZTEC DISCOVERATIVE, RECOVERATIVE, REGENERATIVE ASSOCIATION." Thus delicately leaving an opening to the old Maid of Honor, to pocket *one* of them if she pleased! When having placed them on the table with her gloves, she fell

back in her chair and expired. Peace be to her manes !—and let us charitably hope, that in summing up her account, the recording angel will, at least, place the small item to her credit, that her exit was preceded and hallowed by an *intended kindness*.

Her funeral *convoys* down to Mammonton was as splendid as her nephew's or her own ostentation, could possibly have desired : and *he* had the still further solace of finding himself sole heir to her large landed and immense personal property ; only mortgaged with the slight and rather pleasing injunction, that he was to take the name, and quarter the arms of Mammonton ; so that by "royal assent," he became Mr. Ferrars Mammonton, and lived on, like that other *clever man*, Cecil Lord Burleigh, laden with wealth, honours, and *sin* !—though many, it is true, said of him, as Lady Mary Wortley Montague said of Lord Bolingbroke—"I own I have small regard for him as an author, and the highest contempt for him as a *man*." Yet life is *but* a dream ! say some ; while Shakspeare tells us that—

"Our little life is rounded by a dream,
And even the most wicked sleep sometimes.
But oh ! in that sleep, what dreams may come,"

and *did* come to Mr. Ferrars Mammonton on the night of his aunt's funeral, which, of course, he had gone down to attend ; for upon the same principle that we call men who bring water to extinguish a conflagration, "Firemen," so are all heirs the *chief mourners* at funerals ! Mammonton, in Leicestershire, was a fine, extensive, unincumbered property, with a magnificently timbered deer-park, extending about five-and-twenty miles in a ring fence. The house itself was an old Henry the Seventh House, built round a quadrangle, it was kept up in *statu quo*, and therefore, of course, had its great-hall, full of armour, its music-gallery, its banquetting-hall, ball-room and theatre ; its double ghosted hauntings of a monk and a maiden ; its picture-gallery, dungeons, wainscoated bed-rooms, and bugle

tapestried beds with aigrettes of white ostrich feathers at each corner on the top.

Mr. Ferrars Mammonton, as

“ Monarch of all he surveyed,”

had, of course, been considerably excited during the day, which excitement had taken away his appetite, and its absence made an excellent substitute for grief, so that the intact state of the untouched dishes satisfied the country servants that he was doing his grief in the most orthodox manner; Pumilion, the chef, and the Rev. Stuckup Starchington, being the only sceptics, as they were too much men of the world, and, consequently, too great humbugs themselves not to be able to infallibly test humbug in others. The reverend gentleman had made a point of attending his patroness' funeral *cortège* a little out of gratitude, and a great deal out of hope—hope of striking while the iron was hot—and getting the nephew to give him what the aunt had only promised him in the event of the death, or resignation of the then incumbent; namely, the living of Mammonton worth about £700 a-year, but she herself having died first, and it now being in the gift of her successor, to him. The Rev. Stuckup Starchington accordingly transferred his three per cent. consols adulation, and that so efficiently, that before the second bottle of claret was rung for after dinner, Mr. Ferrars Mammonton had promised him the living, for charlatans are always addicted to coalescing with, and employing charlatans; forgetting the sage warning contained in the homely proverb, that “Two of a trade can never agree,” but their infatuation in this respect is only one of the many wise dispensations of Providence, for if rogues did not sometimes fall out, honest men would never come by their own in this world, of which his Satanic majesty is Lord of the Manor.

It so happened, that on the night of Lady Mammonton's funeral, there occurred one of those terrific and devastating storms, such as “*the oldest inhabitant*” invariably asserts, has

not been known for fifty years—one of those savage and sanguinary hurricanes which cause wrecks at sea, uprootings on land, and destruction everywhere—an elementary revolution in fact, which, like a political one, sweeps away all existing institutions, and leaves ruin and exhaustion in their stead. Three of the most patriarchal oaks in the park, averaging from a thousand to eleven hundred years, had been uprooted; the old house with its almost Stonehenge walls, five feet thick, rocked again; unearthly yellings and despairing shrieks of the convulsed and over-strained winds, filled the air as if the surplus population of hell itself had emigrated to this world in quest of new sin quarries, as men are outward bound in search of the GREAT SIN-ROOT, GOLD!

Sleep! on such a night was out of the question, unless for some witch-bred imp who had been cradled in a cloud, and rocked by the storm, as the lurid lightning flashed like a demon's eye, forkedly askance the glittering bugle tapestry of the state-room, and Mr. Ferrars Mammonton tossed to and fro in the state bed (for of course *he* slept in that, so as to lose no time in inaugurating himself into all his honours!) and each clap of thunder resounded like an eternal anathema of the last judgment! he sat up in bed to listen, and covered his face with his hands, not to see; but there is no hoodwinking the soul, and *his* saw terrible things, that night! which had all come far! far! far! from its native spirit-land, and which *could not*, like human ties, be set aside; then why did he not greet them more eagerly since they were his favourite sins; strong in eternal youth! and panoplied with wings! while angels have but *two*, one for heaven, and one for earth, but *these his* progeny had three! the past! the actual! and the future! which are ever Sin's triple charter of Omnipresence! While they all surrounded the bed with hideous mirth and fantastic antics, the hail came pounding down like grapeshot on the outer windows, till one of them smashed with a tremendous crash! while the electric fluid, unquenched, began streaming in like a lake of

fire, diffusing a suffocatingly sulphureous odour; and the next moment a stentorian gust of wind roared, and rushed headlong into the aperture, and burst open the inner French window which closed like a door, at the same time sweeping down the heavy silver-mounted toilet glass, which broke into a thousand fragments!

"Curse! this phantom rabble!" cried Mr. Ferrars Mam-monton, desperately springing from the bed, and lighting a lucifer, relit his candle; he breathed more freely in the light, and the phantom band appeared 'to vanish like fading shadows, amid the glancing darkness of the bead-wrought tapestry. Luckily, the hand-candlestick had a glass shade, or the light would have been instantly extinguished by the gusts of wind that were eddying through the room; and even as it was, the glass became so splashed with wax, that it was seen but very sepulchrally and faintly through it.

So placing the candlestick on the pillow, and sheltering it with the heavy curtain, he groped his way to the window that had burst open, refastening it, and with some difficulty moving a japan cabinet (the lightest piece of furniture in the room) up against it, so as to prevent its again bursting open; as every pane in the outer window was completely shattered, he then lowered and closed the heavy hangings of both windows, and just as he had finished his labours, such a tremendous clap of thunder shook the house to its very centre, accompanied by such hissing rivulets of rain and blue sulphureous lightning, that both his spirit and his flesh quailed! and he almost thought, while he exclaimed with Marlowe's Faustus—

Faust:—Oh, Ferrars!

Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,
And then thou must be damn'd perpetually.
Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven!
That time may cease, and midnight never come.
Fair nature's eye, rise! rise again, and make
Perpetual day; or let this hour be but a year,

A month, a week, a natural day;
 The *Ferrars* may repent, and save his soul.
O lente! lente! currite noctis equi.
 The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,
 The devil will come, and Faustus must be damn'd!
 Oh! I'll leap up to heaven! who pulls me down!
 * * * * *

And as he repeated this last line, he looked round with a sort of defiance upon the "darkness visible," while the big drops nevertheless rolled from his forehead; but as he gasped for breath, there was also a momentary, and, as it were, sympathetic hush in the warring elements, and the thunder rolled back with dull deep echoings, as of muttered curses, threatened for the future. He staggered back to the bed, and taking up the light, which since the curtains had been lowered, he could now carry without its being extinguished, he walked to the toilet table, and there; amid the *débris* of broken glass, and overturned and commingling essences, he groped for, and found, what he never stirred without, namely—a small gold toilet box, full of Indian hemp tablets, of which he now took one more than his usual dose, and as he did so exclaimed—

"There! the devil's in it, if that don't make me sleep!"

And with this not particularly pious adjuration, he returned to bed and put out the light; nor had he reckoned without his host, for in less than half an hour he was in a profound sleep. At first, this Paradisiacal narcotic, true to its mission, brought him the most enchanting dreams: no fabled Elysium ever exceeded the delights through which he wandered; but happiness, even in a dream, is never woven of a lasting texture; and now, all golden though it was, the flimsy tissue soon tore, and hung in jagged and blackened fragments round the chambers of his imagination; and then the scene changed altogether; it was no longer bright fields of Asphodel, and Paphian bowers, with—

"Flights of gay young loves;"

some of which—

"Had just left their silvery shell,
Whilst others were full in feather;"

with here, a white-footed Hebe, wreathed with "Hyacinthine locks;" and there, a blue-eyed nymph, the glories of whose radiant hair, fell in showers of crinkling gold over her snowy shoulders, while every breath that stirred the flowers, turned their leaves to music's softest harmonies; but it was a wild sea shore, lashed by yet wilder waves, and circled with a zone of black gigantic rocks, against which, strange shadowy-looking sea birds flapped, and broke their wings, like lost departed souls, vainly trying, amid outer darkness, to find an entrance into heaven; till at last, spent with their fruitless efforts, they fell into the foaming sea beneath; then again the winds were hushed, the moon rose up with gentle majesty, bright and clear amid her royal robings of white clouds; the rough sea calmed down into a silver mirror, for night to dress by, and see how most becomingly to place her coronet of stars; and far! far! far! across this silver sea, sailed a gallant ship! with all her sails spread, her decks silent and deserted; all things in heaven and earth seemed sleeping, *she* alone—

"Walked the waters like a thing of life;"

and as she did so, the portal of a light cloud turned on its starry hinges, and from it issued a female form, dressed in a white, filmy vapour, and pressing a shadowy infant to its heart. A passing moonbeam put aside the veil of æther from the face; and when the dreaming man beheld the fair, well-known features, now radiant with the light of immortality! his struggling spirit burst its fetters—and, shrieking "Florence!" with outstretched arms, strode, as though each foot had been a century! over that boundless sea, to reach her; but the faster he pursued, the faster she ran from him. "The ship! the ship!"—he hailed it, he plunged, he swam, he buffeted the now rising waves, but all in vain; and just as he was nearly spent, one

great billow came, and threw him within arm's length of Florence. He had almost touched the border of the misty shroud in which she was enveloped, when she repelled him, by strewing a quantity of large white lilies over the waves : he tried to grasp one ; it turned to a dark, hissing asp, and coiled itself round his arm, which fell powerless and paralysed beside him ! When he looked again the vision had disappeared, and with it the brightness had faded from the face of the waters. All was dark, black as Erebus !—and, suddenly the waves heaved in convulsive throes, as if the sea had been riven from its foundations by an earthquake, and was in labour of *all* its dead ! “The ship ! the ship ! Oh, could he only reach the ship ! Ha ! what was that ? The minute-gun, re-echoed as if by a thousand cannon from the writhing deep—but the ship ! the ship ! where was that ? There, there, there are the dead lights ! She must be *there* ! One effort more—another stroke, but it was with his left arm, the asp still grasped and crippled the right. “Oh, for but one ray of light ! but one, only one ray !” Tush ! the fiend is mighty ! and does things more grandly ! You wanted light, look there—the ship ! the ship ! the convict ship ! was on fire ! The boats were lowered ; the women and children, amid shrieks and nakedness, were huddled into them ; while the sailors, reckless of life, with such a choice of deaths, ran up the ladders, determined to do all that men could do, though the burning spars and brands were flying in all directions over the tracery and rigging.

“Reef the main-topsail and haul down the Union Jack !” shouted the captain. “No, don’t,” said a small voice, “he’ll die at his post, and better so, than fill a felon’s grave !” and the boy had scarcely uttered these words, before the mizenmast fell with a terrible crash ! crushing several men to death ; and next followed the burning foremast and mainmast. The flames now spread so rapidly, that any attempt to scuttle the ship was found to be impossible. She was in ballast and without cargo, except some bales of cotton, which burning mass now sent forth a dense-clearing smoke from her timbers, and then a column of

bright flame, and soon after, all her bulwarks were burnt away from her fore-and-aft quarters; her jib-boom, with its ropes, stood out against the devouring element the longest—but the vessel, careening in a sudden gale, *they* at length also crumbled into the hold, leaving nothing when morning dawned but her charred hull, from which floated a boy's neckerchief, marked "U. J.;"—and her bare and naked stanchions ranging on either side aft.

The dreaming man heaved and tossed more even than the lashing, foaming waves! the fire within him raged, if possible, more fiercely than it had done in the burning ship, and seemed to torture, in his *single being*, as *many lives*, without, alas! annihilating them; for what *can* annihilate the vitality of conscience? He turned, despairingly, from the charred and blackened ship, burnt down to the water's edge—but whichever way he turned, the thin torn kerchief, marked "U. J." flitted before his eyes, and shut out all other objects. "Oh! is there no escape from this?" cried he, in a burst of frantic agony—"Yes, down, down five thousand fathoms deep with me!"—moaned a voice through an approaching wave—and when he looked up he beheld a pale, unearthly face of white sea foam, and long, dark, damp hair like sea moss, such as Alciphron mentions the Greek islanders having had. There was a great majesty on the brow (for King Death! had circled it with his own eternal diadem!) but the face was appalling, for it was that of Adelaida! He pushed back the the phantom with his only available arm, but the waves simulating her image, rolled forward and engulfed him! In vain he struggled against its encompassing and suffocating embraces. One effort more! it was his last breath—and he awoke with a fearful shriek!

* * * * *

Clarke was standing by his bedside, announcing that it wanted a quarter to two, p.m.; and, with Mr. Stuckup Starchington's compliments, to know how he had passed the night?

"One of the hawfullest nights I think I ever saw or heard, sir," added Clarke, on his own account.

"Awful, indeed!" responded his master, as the valet helped to induct him into his violet velvet dressing-gown.

For in truth Mr. Ferrars Mammonton had passed one of those fearfully devastating and eventful nights, wherein dark Nemesis! Fate's stern steward, *audits all accounts*; and Conscience, the inexorable! calls in her usurious mortgage upon the bankrupt soul! till guilt, in its trembling eagerness to renew the bond, and stave off the fearful reckoning from the present to the future, seizes in its trepidation the leaden Seal of TIME! and stamps upon a few brief *hours*, the deep-intended impress of long YEARS!

Even Mr. Stuckup Starchington's scepticism was shaken. Had he not *witnessed* the terrible ravages *grief* had made, he could not have believed that Mr. Ferrars Mammonton would have taken his aunt's death so terribly to heart! At all events, the clever man took the hint, and forthwith the London and provincial papers teemed with touching little paragraphs of Mr. Ferrars Mammonton's intense grief! and the injury his health had sustained from it! and the consequent loss society *might* sustain from the temporary absence of one of its most distinguished ornaments! But as every cloud hath its silver lining, so verily hath every *dream* its *real* side in some niche or other of time or space. And, as soon as the intelligence could reach, the news arrived that on the high seas, the night of the dreadful storm at Mammonton, in the convict ship "Catchemalive," Captain Swivel, burden 300 tons, a fire had broken out, in which (with the exception of two boat-loads of women and children, picked up by a French *corvette* towards noon the next day,) every soul on board had perished.

* * * * *

Oh! Nemesis,—and hast thou, then, no evenner-handed justice for *our* world than the destruction of the innocent, and the triumphs for the guilty, or for thy severest lash the feverish terrors of a dream?

Patience! *none*,—till the dream is ended!

"BUT THE END IS NOT YET!"

Conclusion.

"Thou art my hope in the day of evil."

Jer. xvii. 17.

* * * * *
"By all thy dower of lights and fires;
By all the eagle in thee, all the dove;
By all thy lives and deaths of love;
By thy large draughts of intellectual day,
And by thy thirst of love, more large than they;

* * * * *
By the full kingdom of that final kiss,
That seal'd thy parting soul, and made it his;
By all the heavens thou hast in him;
Fair Sister of the Seraphim;
By all of Him we have in thee,—
Leave nothing of myself in me;
Let me so read thy life that I
Unto all life of mine may die."

Richard Crashaw to St. Theresa of Spain.

It was a glorious evening in July, and the happy village of Glenfern was bathed in the soft gold and purple haze of a summer sunset. Edith and Mrs. Dunbar had returned that morning, all the villagers were in their holiday gear to receive them, triumphal arches of evergreens had been erected for three miles on the road, distant from Glenfern, with "WELCOME HOME!" in large letters of the brightest flowers. They had, it is true, put a great many other mottoes and devices; but the Duke, with his usual good taste, that most perfect of all taste, the taste of good feeling, had requested that this brief, sincere, and cordial welcome should be the only one; for did not a HOME, to

which a *thousand true hearts* bade *ONE* welcome, comprise everything? Of course, the horses was taken off, and the carriage was drawn by the whole population up to the house. At the head of this happy band walked the Duke himself, accompanied by Alciphron Murray, Everard Wilmot, and Jacob Jacobs, who had been especially invited to the bridal, that he might see how well his noble-minded present graced the little church. As soon as the carriage was stopped by the concourse of people, their joyous voices tessellated the air with blessings and welcomes, which Edith returned with one fervent "God bless you all!" And then, bursting into tears, regardless of the assembled hundreds, threw herself into the Duke's arms, and, through her tears, sobbed out—"Oh, Harold! can I ever, ever tell you how much I love you?" Then everything swam before her; her light weight became heavy; she had fainted; the people ceased their acclamations, and the Duke told them to draw the carriage as rapidly as they could on to the house.

"She is over-fatigued," said the Archdeacon; "we travelled too fast; but she was naturally so anxious to get on."

"Hoot, Sammy Panmuir! she's ower happy, puir bairn," said Mrs. Dunbar; "and I ken, by my aine, when a heart's been darkened and blinded wi' sorrow sae lang, it can nae bear sic a great glare o' happiness all at aince."

And the old lady, as she rapturously inhaled the perfume of her native heather, spoke as broad Scotch as she could, as a sort of jubilee to celebrate the happy event.

"Oh! why, why," said the Duke, in an agony, "did you let her travel so fast? I am afraid she is really seriously ill, there is such a dark violet shadow round her eyes. I would have waited any length of time rather than this."

"I assure your Grace it will be nothing; a few hours' rest, you'll see, will quite restore her," said the Archdeacon.

But the Duke saw nothing but Edith's pale, unanswering face, and heard nothing but that *she* did *not* breathe. When they arrived at the house, the Duchess was at the gate to wel-

come them ; and, luckily, Dr. Scott, the Duke's family physician, was with her.

"Here, Scott, quick, for Heaven's sake! feel her pulse—that is, try and do so, for I can feel none."

"Your Grace must not agitate yourself," rejoined the physician, feeling Edith's pulse. "Miss Panmuir has only fainted ; we must get her to bed, and for a few hours keep her as quiet as possible ; the over-fatigue and over-excitement have been too much for her."

"Ah ! that's just what I told the Duke," said Samuel Panmuir, with his usual pomposity, endorsing the doctor's opinion in return for his having done the same by him.

The Duke, who would not trust his precious burden to anybody else, gently descended from the carriage, and carried Edith up to her *own room*.

"Oh, mother ! mother ! don't *you* deceive me, *too*," said he, as he gently laid Edith on the bed ; "but tell me if you don't think this is something more than a mere fainting fit."

"My dearest love," said his mother, wiping her streaming eyes, "how *can* I tell you till she comes to herself ; which, please God, she will do soon. And now, my dear Liddesdale, go down stairs, Mina and I will get her into bed ; and then you shall come up again and sit and watch beside her, for I know you would not trust *even me* to nurse her."

"I'll go into the dressing-room," said the Duke, with a heavy sigh, "and then I shall hear the moment you call me."

While this brief dialogue was passing between the mother and son, poor Mrs. Dunbar was running all over the house, more like a little madcap of a child than a steady old lady of eighty-one ; kissing all the doors and curtains ; and she would have kissed the floors also, only she could no longer stoop, even to conquer. Then she kissed all the old familiar faces of the maids, and actually shook hands with old Anderson, and then she said she must gang and see the bairns in the nursery ; but, finding herself tired at the first landing, she called out in a shrill

treble,—“Mary, Malcolm, why dinna ye come doon!” These were her own children, buried some twenty years. Then she shook her head and said, “Eh! I forgot; its Donald and Edith, I mean. But mind, Donald, that you dinna bring Kelpie, for the beastie just drives me clean daft; there’s nae sic a spoilt doggie in a’ the three kingdoms; its a’ways the best goon a body has that he must get his teeth in.” And so the poor old lady kept running back into the nooks and corners of the past all the day.

While these events were passing at the Moated House, “The Panmuir Arms” was not without its share of excitement. Amy Verner herself said, she did not care “hoo soon she went noo; that she had seen Miss Edith’s blessed face aince mair, and Murray’s too, for that matter,—and that Christian Jew’s,” as she called Jacobs. “And as for the Duke,” added she, “ye maun jist look oot, Sammy Panmuir; for gin the Papists will ainly make a saint of *him*, I’ll turn Roman mysel’ and worship him, under yer Reverence’s ain maist orthodox nose; though gin the De’il war but a rich *duke*, I dinna doot but ye’d mak’ forty Articles of the Thirty-Nine, in order to cram him into *your* creed somehow.”

At which the weird triumvirate, who were her auditors, uttered a hoarse chuckle; and then began bantering Meggie Armstrong, who was rocking herself to and fro upon a low hassock, with about three inches of an old clay pipe in the corner of her mouth.

“Aweel, Meggie,” said the two other cronies, nearly in the same breath; “ye see what false loons yer kelpies* of the maist eldritch kind war, to shriek round ye, and fash ye wi’ sic dismal tales about the leddie! wha has come back, safe and weel, and ’ll be a bonnie bride on Saturday.”

* The Scotch kelpie, or water-sprite, enacts the same part, as death’s herald, by his shrieks, as does the Irish banshee, or fairie’s wife, the English bogie, or what in Wales are called Corpse Candles;—that is, its howling is considered by the natives as an infallible forerunner of death. See Pennant.

But Meggie only rocked herself the more, as she muttered—
“I canna’ help it! I canna’ help it! and I’m *swee** to own it;
but—

I heard it in the river,
I saw it in the cloud!
They brought a wreath to give her,
And it turned to a shroud!

“Eh! and the broken nest, and the black crape limbers hanging to it, and the uprooted tree,—the young tree! sae winsome, green, and bonnie, that a’ came to the leddie hersel’ when the young Laird deed. Dinna ye remember, Mistress Verner!” added she, with an inquisitorial look, removing her pipe from her mouth.

“Na, I dinna remember,” said Amy, sharply; “and I must just beg that, on the eve of a bridal—and sic a bridal!—ye’ll nae be raking up your wraiths and kelpies, Meggie Armstrong, to make the marriage lights burn blue. Though, thank gude-ness! the wedding will be in bright noonday, in the little kirk; and nane of your fine heathenish doings in the gloaming by wax tapers, in a drawing-room, when if it war nae for the heart-aches that come after, a bady wad niver ken whather they were married or nae. Sae just plunge yer kelpies back into the river, send yer wraiths a rambling in the kirk-yard, and gi’e your witch’s memory a holiday for aince, Meggie.”

And thus silenced, Meggie sat and thought the more.

Everybody who has seen, or who knows anything of that fatal malady, the scarlet fever, knows how subtle, treacherous, and lingering its infection often is: sometimes not breaking out for one, two, and even three months after all danger is supposed to be safely past.

And although it was now six weeks since Edith had taken poor Florence’s infected baby in her arms, it was only now—driven from its stronghold, as it were, by unusual excitement

* Loath.

and fatigue—that the disease manifested itself in her; and when she had recovered from her swoon, which she did in about half an hour after they had got her into bed, Dr. Scott, with infinite consternation and regret, announced that it was the scarlet fever she had.

“Oh! for Heaven’s sake!” said she, turning her heavy eyes on the Duchess and her son, who were sitting beside her bed. “*Do, do* leave the room instantly; I shall be much more ill if you stay.”

“Go, mother,” said the Duke, seeing that she did not move. “Go,” repeated he, with a meaning and imploring look. “And I’ll come presently. You also,” added he, to Dr. Scott and Mina.

“Oh! you go too, Harold. More than all, *you* must not stay here,” cried Edith, darting to the farthest side of the bed, and holding out both her hands, so as to keep him at arm’s length.

“Edith!” said he, calmly, but with a sort of solemn determination that made her pause and listen to him,—“I do not even ask your consent; but here I swear that no earthly power shall force me from your bed-side—not even your commands. If there *is* infection, if there is danger for you, I will share it; but I can quite enter into your scruples in one way, though I turn a deaf ear to them in another; and it is more meet that your husband should nurse you than only your lover, though were I your husband for a thousand years! I should still be your lover. Let me then, my own dear, dear love, this very hour become the former!”

“How can I be so selfish?” said Edith, covering her face with her hands, “yet I own it would make me so happy! for if I am only to suffer, I feel I could suffer with more courage as your wife; and if I am to die—Oh, Harold!—I feel that as the wife of one so good! so pure! so noble! as you are, I should be entitled to a better place even in heaven? But then, to let you breathe this infected air—no, no—it is too, too horribly selfish!”

"The more of self, when the self is you?" cried he, pressing her fondly in his arms, and despite her struggles kissing her burning lips, "the more I shall love it. But as for infection, my dearest love, that is nonsense, for if there is any danger of it, the risk has been already ran, and the danger incurred. And now I'll send for Wilmot immediately; for I suppose you have no particular fancy for the Archdeacon?"

"Oh! pray don't let your mother come in again," said Edith, as the Duke, having rang the bell, walked to the door to send for Mr. Wilmot, to whom he wrote a hasty line telling him why he required his immediate presence, and to bring the clerk and the parish register with him. The Duchess was not a person to raise frivolous objections to anybody's wishes, when those wishes were not in themselves wrong, more especially the wishes of her much-loved son; so although the tears overflowed her eyes, she made not the slightest demur to this hurried marriage, but as to being kept out of the room, *that* she would not submit to, but used the same arguments as her son had done. As for the Archdeacon, it was agreed on all sides that it would be a pity to disturb him from his wine, for so unostentatious and almost unorthodox an affair; and as for Mrs. Dunbar, the poor old lady having trotted herself tired, and being then fast asleep in her armchair, every one thought it would be a pity to awake her. But Murray was called out of the dining-room. So that by the time Everard Wilmot and the clerk arrived, he, the Duchess, Dr. Scott, and Mina, were there as witnesses to the marriage; Murray giving the bride away. Every one made a desperate effort to suppress their tears, and succeeded, till Mr. Wilmot came to that part of the ceremony where he had to ask—

"Wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour, and keep her in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her so long as ye both shall live?"

At the words "so long as ye *both* shall live," despite all his

efforts, the young clergyman's voice trembled slightly, and then the tears, which had only before trembled in the eyes of the assistants, now rolled down their cheeks, and were by no means checked when the weak voice of the bride, in trying to be energetic in promising to love her husband "*till death did them part*," only became fainter. At length the ceremony was concluded; the last name was signed in the book; and every one noiselessly but simultaneously left the room.

"Mine! mine! for ever!" said the husband, clasping his wife in his arms, and sealing every word with a passionate kiss.

"Till death do us part, dear, dear Harold!" murmured Edith, as her head sank on his shoulder—"but no, even death cannot part us now, for I feel were I to die this minute, it would be your soul I should take with me and leave you mine till it was fit to go, and then you will bring it to me; won't you, love? and in heaven as on earth the two will be but one. Oh! Harold, I am too happy! it seems as if such happiness was stolen from heaven, and therefore may not be enjoyed on earth, but must be returned to the pure sphere from whence it came before it gets sullied with humanity."

"Which it never can be, darling! while it is in an angel's keeping; but I am forgetting Scott's orders, that you are not to talk."

"Then I won't; only let me look into your eyes while the daylight lasts. But dear, dear Harold, if you should get this horrid fever!"

"Hush! not another word." And there for a long hour he lay beside her, bathing her burning forehead in *aqua felsina* and water, that the Doctor had left by the bed-side for that purpose. At length she faintly murmured—

"I'm so thirsty, love."

He rang the bell, and as soon as Mina appeared, shading a candle with her hand, he said—

"The Duchess"—(and no *parvenu* ever pronounced a brand new title with more pride!)"—"the Duchess is thirsty, Mina;

have the goodness to ask my mother and Dr. Scott to come here. What would you like to drink, love?—tea?" added he, turning to his wife.

"No, not tea, something cold, if I may have it."

"*Monseigneur, Monsieur le Docteur a dit, que Madame la Duchesse pour apprendre de l'eau d'orge glacée.*"

"*Bien ; apportez en vite,*" said he.

Having only been in the adjoining room, the Duchess and Dr. Scott soon obeyed the summons.

"My dearest child," said the former, affectionately embracing her daughter-in-law, "I hope Liddesdale has not been making you talk; and mind," added she, holding up her finger, "though I ask you the question, I don't want you to answer it."

"Scott," said the Duke, as soon as the physician had again felt Edith's pulse, "ten thousand pounds for you, if you get my wife soon well."

"I assure your grace," replied the doctor, "I would give it sooner than take it to do so, did it depend upon me; but really, if I might advise—I mean on the Duchess's account—I should strongly recommend your grace's retiring to rest as usual; for I am sure the idea of your sitting up with her will only increase her fever."

"Indeed will it," said Edith; "so do promise me, Harold, that you will go to bed."

"I'll promise you that I *won't sit up*; but leave the room I not only cannot, but I *won't*; but I'll lie upon the sofa."

"You see, dear Edith," said his mother, trying to smile, "what a Jesuit he is; moreover, like all men, the moment he turns into a husband, he *will* have his own way: so, for the sake of a quiet life, you had better let him have it."

Edith's only reply was a sigh, as she cast her eyes, full of love and suffering, on her husband. The Duchess and Murray remained in her room till two o'clock, when she insisted upon their going to bed. As for the Duke, notwithstanding his promises of lying down on the sofa, there was no getting him from

her bed-side. About four in the morning, when Edith, by the pale rays of the night-light, looked out, and saw his fond anxious eyes wide open, and still watching her, she said—

“As you *will not* sleep, and I cannot, *do*, dearest, read to me the fifty-first chapter of Isaiah.”

Like that of the elder Wilmot, the Duke's elocution was faultless, and the sublimities of the prophet lost nothing by the deep, touching, and harmonious voice, through which they were now uttered, when he came to the eleventh and twelfth verses,—

11. “Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy *shall* be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.”

12. “I, *even I, am* he that comforteth you: who *art* thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man *that* shall die, and of the son of man *which* shall be made as grass?”

Edith made him read them over again, and then said—“Remember those, dear Harold.”

There was also a small volume which Edith never was without, of perhaps the most consolatory—because the most divinely-thoughted and beautifully-worded—prayers that were ever written, by the author of “THE FAITHFUL PROMISER,” entitled “MORNING WATCHES,” and “NIGHT WATCHES.” It was just four nights that her husband-lover had watched beside her, and when he closed the Bible, she said in a faint voice, “If you are not tired, dearest, would you read me the fourth “Night Watch?” His only response was to kneel beside her bed, and with one of her shadowy, burning hands clasped in his, he prayed aloud the following beautiful

“PRAYER.”

“Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?”

Psalms cxxxix. 7.

"THE ubiquity of God! how baffling to any finite comprehension! to think that above us, and around us, and within us, there is nothing but DEITY! the invisible footprints of an omniscient, omnipresent One! 'His eyes are on every place!' on rolling planets, and tiny atoms; on the bright seraph, and the lowly worm!—roaming in searching scrutiny through the tracts of immensity, and reading the occult and hidden page of the heart! 'All things are naked and opened to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.' O God! shall this Thy omnipresence appal me? Nay, in my seasons of sadness, sorrow, and loneliness—when other comforts and comforters have failed—when, it may be, in the darkness and silence of some midnight hour, in vain I have sought repose—how sweet to think 'My God is here!' I am *not* alone. The omniscient One, to whom the darkness and the light are both alike, is hovering over my sleepless pillow! 'He that keepeth Israel, neither slumbers nor sleeps!'

"O thou eternal Sun! it cannot be darkness, or loneliness, or sadness, where Thou art. There can be no night to the soul which has been cheered with Thy glorious radiance!

"'Lo! I am with you alway!' How precious, blessed Lord! is this thy legacy of parting love! In the midst of Thy Church till the end of time—ever present, *omnipresent*! The true 'Pillar of cloud' by day, and fire by night, preceding and 'encamping by us, in every step of our wilderness journey. My soul! think of Him at this moment; in the mysteriousness of His Godhead nature, and yet with all the exquisitely tender sympathies of a glorified humanity, as ever present with every member of the family. He has redeemed with His blood! aye, and as much present with every individual soul as if he had none other to care for, but as if *that one* engrossed *all* His affection and love! The Great Builder, surveying every stone and pillar of His spiritual temple—the Great Shepherd, with his eye on every sheep of His fold—the Great High Priest and Elder Brother, marking every tear-drop, noting every sorrow, listening

to every prayer, knowing the *peculiarities* of every case; no number perplexing Him—no variety bewildering Him—*able* to attend to *all*!—myriad wants drawing hourly on His treasury, and yet no diminution: that treasury ever emptying, and yet ever filling, and always full!

“Lord! Thy perpetual and all-pervading presence turns darkness into day. I am *not* left unbefriended to weather the storms of life, if Thy hand be from hour to hour piloting my frail bark. Gracious antidote to every earthly sorrow, ‘*I have set the Lord always before me!*’ Even now, as night is drawing its curtains around me, be this my closing prayer—

“Blessed Saviour! abide with me, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent!’ Under the overshadowing wings of Thy presence and love,

“I WILL LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE, AND SLEEP.”

“Thanks, dearest,” murmured Edith; “when I am gone think of these words as mine, and then you will not forget them.”

* * * * *

In truth, he was not likely to forget them, for six nights and days he watched by that bed-side, with a bursting heart, to be torn from it on the seventh with a broken one. The mortal had put on immortality. The innocent of earth had become the spotless of Heaven; the riven heart of the husband lover was buried in the coffin with his bride; but the trusting soul of the Christian followed the angel to her eternal HOME! where death *cannot* come, and where sorrow is unknown!

* * * * *

The Duchess of Liddesdale, having the burdens of many hearts to bear, tried to set aside the heavy sorrow of her own: she broke the intelligence of Edith’s departure as gently as might be to Mrs. Dunbar.

“Another bairn gone before! are there, then, none but the young let into Heaven?” murmured the poor old lady; and

then fell back into a calm sleep, from which she never woke again in this world.

The Archdeacon was most sincerely grieved, no—disappointed ; nor did any circumstance tend to console him, till he saw the silver ducal coronet on Edith's violet velvet coffin, when he said out loud, though alone,—

“ Well, she died a duchess, at all events ! and *I* am connected, though distantly it is true, with one of the greatest families in the kingdom.”

The whole village of Glenfern seemed to mourn but with one heart, and to weep as if with one pair of eyes. A fortnight after Edith's joyous return to the home of her childhood, the sound of the bells of the village church rolled across the lea, but they were not the merry chimings of marriage bells ! and yet they *were* nuptial peals—for the young bride was being conveyed from the kirk to the tomb of her fathers !

That night, when the moon had risen, and Aleiphron Murray, once more with Eös, was wading through the dank grass of the wilderness to the mausoleum, he found Meggie Armstrong sitting on the step of the entrance, rocking herself to and fro, and muttering—

I heard it in the river !
I saw it in the cloud !
They brought a wreath to give her,
And it turned to a shroud !

L'ENVOI.

THE EDITOR TO ALCIPHRON.

FRIEND ALCIPHRON,—

It may perhaps be said, that all who publish a book in these days, when there are already only too many, do a foolish thing ; but *thou* hast done a foolish thing, bearing a hundred foolish blossoms. First, thou hast published thy book without knowing not only any *clique* of the Press, but even any individual of a clique, which, indeed, might have enabled thee and thy book to pass as unnoticed as an additional drop added to the sea ; hadst thou not been guilty of the still greater folly, of getting me, of all people in the world—or rather out of the world—to edit it ; and therefore thou art likely to reap a plentiful harvest of abuse from all *cliques*, who are literary Swiss, ever ready to do battle for or against any one, provided they are only *paid* for so doing ; and there is only one halfpennyworth of bread to all this sack, or in other words, only one handful of honest, well-disciplined troops to all these mercenaries. Next, thou hast had the insufferable pretension, like thy Greek prototype and namesake, to describe men and women as they *are*, rather than as they ought to be (always with the exception of the Duchess Dowager of Liddesdale—for I confess never to have seen, or even to have heard, of such a MOTHER-IN-LAW ! in or out of Paradise, for both Adam and Eve were singularly blest in not having one ; and I think *that* must have been the real forbidden, as it is the *forbidding* fruit which the devil helped the silly creatures to).

Therefore, friend Alciphron, as thou hast presumed to do photographic portraits, rather than graceful *couleur de rose* mythological *beau idéals*, were I not too tired getting thy book into what the sailors call "ship-shape,"—which, of course, a book must be, before it is *launched*—I could write thee the exact *quantum* and *style* of abuse thou wilt have from *each separate Swiss* review, with the flavour of all the spicing done to order! For wo unto thee! oh, Alciphron! hast thou not thrown down the gauntlet to that Paterfamilias of interminable progeny, and bulwarks of relations in all directions—the great Mr. TWADDLE! Whereas, hadst thou instead only have sent the old gentleman a turkey at Christmas, stuffed full of the most orthodox prejudices; and enough painted cake to have made all the little Twaddles a real blessing to the apothecaries' shops; and a beautifully bound edition of Hansard to each of the Twaddles in office; and a Peerage and Book of Beauty to all the Mrs. and Miss Twaddles—then, indeed, thou wouldst have had all the world and his mother-in-law praising thee and thy book, and, who knows, perhaps actually inviting thee out to tea! Again, thou hast an ugly, prosy trick of thinking, and *that* even the publishers can't bear; they tell you so; for their sheet-anchor is the circulating libraries; therefore, in a work of fiction, they like reflections to be few and far between, like brains in a critic's head. However, don't *quite* despair; there is a certain fable about a painter who tried to please every one, and therefore pleased no one; but as thou hast tried to please nobody, thou mayest, perchance, please somebody.

In the adamant chain of Mr. Ponsonby Ferrars' selfishness, to the links of which, the complex miseries of OTHERS are ever appending, you develop the *apparently* contradictory, but perfectly compatible, vices of intense meanness and parsimony, with extreme ostentation and extravagance, which are the usual concomitants of the self-worshipping sensualist, and which is a true type of what our present social, or rather *anti-social* system, with its intellectual *fiorettoni*, can, and but too often *does*,

produce, namely, a solid block of vice, gnarled with villany, but veneered with virtue! (?) and highly varnished with HYPOCRISY, which in these days of pretension and of SHAM, is a far more marketable and popular commodity than the *rococo* genuine article of unvarnished excellence.

Yet if these *seeming*, thickly strewn, and ever-springing thorny injustices of earth, make us either doubt or despair, where is our faith in the ubiquitous Godhead whom we profess to worship? "Wilt thou not *trust* Him, even though thou canst not trace the mystery of His dealings?" But if thy *hope*—that best brave courage of the soul! be indeed so weak and fainting, that it needs re-steeping in the cold swift streams of earth to brace it; plunge it at least into those which the most faithfully reflect the bright eternal galaxy of Heaven!—and hear the Apocalypse of a recent, but immortal! POET:—*

"But, better days, and brighter, and as deep
In strife, and more heroic than romance,
May dawn; and ere I sink. There comes a day
For Europe and the world—the nations' day,
When rising hearts span ages with a bound!
And the earth shakes, and heaven. There may be days
For men and glorious women; there will be
Those women then: bright women, quickening men,
And lulling loftiest cares on their sweet breasts,
Soft wave—swell to the gallant on-borne bark,
And lulling deepest cares in their sweet laps,
With more than solace—more than sympathy.

* * * * *

And I my day may find. It yet may be;
Time will bring all. I once my hour may see."

* See a small casket of those rarest of all literary pearls, a collection of exquisite and *genuine poetry*, entitled

"MORBIDA,"

OR "PASSION PAST, AND OTHER POEMS, FROM THE CYMBIC AND OTHER SOURCES,"

Recently published by Saunders and Otley: London, 1854.

But, worst of all, thou hast photographed with such a vengeance, that thou hast dealt with thy good people and thy bad people exactly as they *are* dealt with in this world : that is, thou hast overwhelmed the former in affliction (with yet a thread of fine gold running through it, spun from God's promises, which supports them under all), and thou hast towered up thy bad people with prosperity—but yet, a black drop in the dregs of their jewelled cup, which dims the diamond's flash, and poisons all their nectar. Now, depend upon it, the critics accustomed to the tag five-pound note moral at the end of five-shilling books, of all the good people being terrestrially regaled with bread and jam, and all the naughty ones put in the corner, at the end of the said books (which should be made to follow their example), will think this a very bad moral, not to say a wicked heresy ! But this is the part of the book I admire the most, friend Alciphron, and find no fault with, because it shows thee to be a true believer, who *feels* as well as *trusts*, that this world is but God's crucible, in which He tries and separates the pure ore, His pure ore from the dross ; therefore, in this crucible the dross must necessarily have the best of it, as the scum invariably rises to the top. Little "evidence of things not seen" can that heart have, which, however great the apparent injustice of its trials, for one moment doubts this : which does not, however, mean that the most sincere Christians, any more than the most hardened sceptics, can avoid murmuring under such trials ; but there are two sorts of murmuring—one is of the spirit, unto defiance and blasphemy ! the other is of the flesh, unto weakness and prayer ! the former pulls us down below the level of the earth, the other raises us up far, far beyond it. It is not that the most exalted faith can save us from a single sorrow, misfortune, or even torture, in this world ; but it makes *martyrs* of us, instead of *victims* ;—the martyr sees the crown beyond the stake, the victim sees and feels nothing but the flames. Therefore, let none expect either redress for wrong, or reward for right, in this world.

Witness the late dastardly calumnies upon Prince Albert:—whom the generality of persons might have supposed, that deserving so richly as His Royal Highness does to be revered as a man, and respected as a citizen, he might have continued (more especially in England) to have received the adulation of a prince, which for once, being justly due, was not fulsome; but no, even royal virtues cannot, it seems, be exempt from the tax the world imposes upon all virtue—therefore, even this most wise and estimable prince—

“Per hominum capita molliter ambulans,
Plantas pedum teneras habeus”—

still could not tread sufficiently gently, with all his most admirably balanced discretion and nice observance, to prevent some political valetudinarians fancying that he had trod on their gouty prejudices!

One word more on the drift of thy “Lay Sermons,” friend Alciphron, ere I bid thee farewell. Thou wouldst inculcate the doctrine of a generous, universal, and yet *individual* sympathy—that divine germ of *real* Christianity; thou wouldst, in fact, do away with our hog-in-armour national selfishness, by bringing into daily and practical use, Solon’s axiom, that “Injustice would soon cease from the world if the bystanders would only feel the same indignation against it that the victims do.” Moonshine! gird up thy loins—pass on and rejoin Solon in the Elysian Fields!—thou wilt never bring it to pass *here*, for knowest thou not that we are a *commercial* people, and go to market even with the Decalogue, merely selecting such portions of it as can serve our *own* purposes, and supply our *own individual* wants, like the Rev. Ebenezer Cantwell. The reverend gentleman (so the legend runs) was travelling once upon a time upon the top of a vehicle known to our ancestors, and called a stage-coach, when, in passing a cottage door, he saw two geese fighting, and begging the coachman to stop, he jumped down, seized the fattest of the two combatants, wrang its neck, thrust

it into his pocket for supper, and nimbly regaining his seat beside the coachman, exclaimed with a glow of pious virtue, "Blessed are the peace-makers!" They had not proceeded above five miles farther, where they stopped to change horses, when lo! there was a man beating his wife most unmercifully. "There! Mr. Peacemaker," cried Jehu, "is more work for you." "Not so," replied the Rev. Ebenezer, turning up his eyes and hands with the most saintly horror!—"Cursed be he, who separateth man and wife!" And the reverend gentleman is our model, in social, moral, political, and ecclesiastical matters. But, let not *this* world's injustice, which was created with it (and therefore will only cease with it), make us look round and despair; rather, on the contrary, let it *force* us to look *up* and HOPE! Those upon whom it has *not* this effect,—whatever they may profess to the contrary,—doubt the sufficiency of the atonement, and the sincerity of the Gospel! God speed thee! Alciphron, for *thou* doubttest neither.

Thy Friend,
Though not thy Counsellor,
ROSINA BULWER LYTTON.

January 30th, 1854.

THE END.

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